10 THE

CROVVNE CONJVGALL,

OR THE

SPOVSE ROYAL.

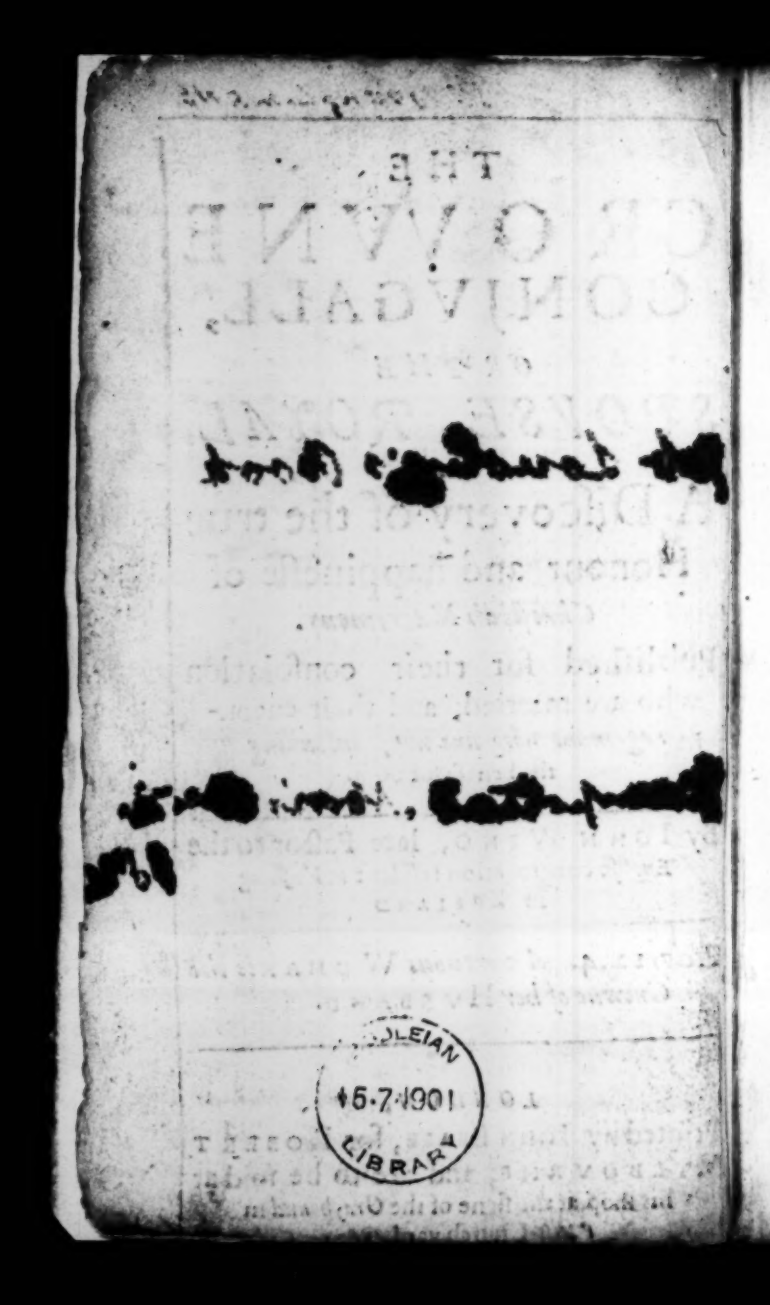
A Discovery of the true Honour and happinesse of *Christian Matrimony*.

Published for their consolation who are married, and their encouragement who are not, intending the benefit of both.

By IOHN WING, late Pastor to the *English* congregation resident at *Vlissing* in ZEELAND.

Prov. 12.4. *A vertuous* WOMAN *is the Crowne of her* HVSBAND.

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TO THE
RIGHT WOR-
SHIPFVLL Mr MA-
THEVV PEEKE Eſquire,
Major of the Towne and Port
of *Sandwich*; and to the Wor-
ſhipfull, the IVRATES his
brethren, the *Common Counſel*, and
vvhole Corporation of the ſame,
John Wing doth wiſh Grace, and
Peace, and all good from the living
GOD, through the love of our
Lord Ieſus Chriſt, by the
worke of the Holy
GHOST.

YOur former fa-
vours and the a-
boundant fruits
of your love
(Right worſhipfull and
welbeloved in the Lord)

which I haue haue from time to time experienced, ever ſince it pleaſed the Lord to caſt affliction upon mine externall ſtate, doe daily provoke and deeply challenge from me, the manifeſtation of a thankefull heart unto you all, to whoſe kindneſſes, I ſtand a *Debtor*, much engaged to this day. How I have deſired to expreſſe the ſame in ſecret to him, who will reward you openly, his holy Maieſty (before whom my continuall commemorations

of

of you have beene made) doth well know, and I doe not desire to boast before men. Him I doe ever confesse and praise, as the fountaine and founder of every favour: hee is the first moover of mans heart to mercifulnesse; and him I blesse for you al, and you all, and every of you in him; in as much as you have often ministred to my necessities, and refreshed me. I cannot but acknowledge you as his instruments of much good, most lovingly imparted

to mee and mine. I leave you to heaven for recompence, in better blessings then the earth can yeeld. And my GOD shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Iesus. All that can do, is to acknowledge the debt, and it is more then I am able to doe, as I ought. Howbeit, by these presents, (as a witnesse of your worthy favours,) I doe here present these first fruits of my publike endeavors, and unto whom may they so properly appertaine

pertaine as unto you; from whom I have received first and last, ſo many love-tokens. I doe not crave your protection, but your acceptation of theſe poore labours. If I have ſpoken truth, who neede protect mee? if not, who can? all the powers under heaven are inſufficient to ſupport errour; and the truth is able to ſuſtaine it ſelfe againſt the gates of hell. Beſides, I am privie to too much ignorance, and impotency of minde, I may faile in judgement,

and ſoone ſlip into ſome unſound paſſage, being here alone in this forraign land, and (if I fall) having none to helpe mee up. And were it not iniurious, and unreaſonable to entreate your patronage, where there is ſuch poſſibility of my miſcarriage, I ſeeke no more but a loving entertainement of it, as it is: I tender it only as a teſtimony of my grateſull minde, deſiring your beſt good by it, and if you ſhall pleaſe ſo to receive it, I have my deſire, and I know

know my aberrations in it ſhall be paſſed by, and kindely pardoned. I will ſay nothing of the matter contained in it, it will ſpeake plainly, if you read it adviſedly. If I ſhould enter upon any diſcovery of the ſtate thereof, I ſhould prefixe a long Epiſtle to a little booke, which is no good decorum. And therefore I willingly ſhorten my ſelfe, and draw to an end, with mine unceſſant deſires of your endleſſe good, that the LORD may pleaſe to abound towards

wards you in all grace, and fill your hearts with heavenly favours; that so both in your publike state and society, in your private families, and every one particularly, in his owne soule and body, may be truely blessed, with such a measure of all mercies here, as may helpe you all to the infinit glory of heaven for ever, through Iesus Christ, both your Lord and ours, to whose good guidance I commend you, that you may be enabled unto every good, and armed against

all

all evill, and ſo worke
out your ſalvation before
him, who is LORD over
all, and rich unto all,
even GOD bleſ-
ſed for ever, in
him I
reſt.

Your worſhips unfainedly, for
all good within my poſsibility

IOHN WING.

TO

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

IT is not my mind to make long narration of the causes of this my writing, or to plead excuses. I cannot complement in cases of conscience. I hope I shall not be put to any apologie in this particular. If importunity of friends (yea of some reverend

verend Miniſters) might have prevailed, it had beene abroad before now. If abundance of bookes (of this ſubiect) might have hindered it, it had never ſeene the light. But as I deeme the former ſome comfortable encouragement (though no ſufficient warrant) to induce the publication of our labours; in as much as we may lawfully non-ſuit many (in ſome caſes) who intreate us; and in ſome other, wee may ſend abroad the things which were never ſought of us. So, the latter can be (to mee) no impediment at all, but rather

a ſpurre: for if ſo many have gone before mee, ſhould not I follow? VVere it not ſhame for mee to ſit ſtill and doe nothing, when others have done ſo much? If any ugre the over plus of Printing and exceſſe of Authors and VVriters, let him carry this complaint to the Divells mart, *and to the men whoſe preſſes, and ſhops, hee doth imploy (and doubtleſſe hee will one day pay) for the vent and ſale of* ballads, play-bookes, *and* pamphlets, *whereof ſome are impure, ſome prophane, ſome idle, all* infernall. *Of good bookes the more,*

more, the better: it is impossible to surfet, where it is lawfull to covet, as in these things wee may, nay, wee must. I much grieve for their sicke and unsound estate, who are cloy'd with spirituall foode, hee that feeles himselfe most full, is most woefull. I acknowledge (but I doe not iustifie) my former resistance to this service. I now see the enemy is potent, and hath done so much dammage upon matrimony, that all the Lords army of faithfull warriours had need be put in array, and goe out against him. And because wee have but very

few

few English forces *in this Land: I seeing the want, have thereupon (though but weake) resolved to make one, and to doe my best to rescue the honour and happinesse of this ordinance of God. My armour is not guilded, nor my weapons damask'd, or engraven; my care is to have all of* proofe, *no matter how* plaine, *for I intended not to train, or make a flourish, but professe to fight. This is but the first on-set, I have resolved upon a further encounter, so soone as I can be furnished to goe againe into the field. If thou reapest any*

pro-

profit by this, pray for mee in that as I shall not cease to doe for thee, that thou mayest be enriched by thy reading, of holy Treatises; and be made more wise *to know, and* willing *to doe what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee. To whose grace, and good guidance I commend thee, wishing thy best happinesse in* Christ Iesus, *in whom*

I am

Thine, so farre as I may further thee to him.

IOHN WING.

A LABELL OF THE CROVVNE CONIVGALL.

OR,

A DIRECTION by way of *Table* to the Treatiſe of the *honourable eſtate of* MARRIAGE.

Divided into 12. *Chapters*:

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THE SPOVSE ROYALL,

Discovered in a Treatise, on PROV. 12.4.

A Vertuous WOMAN *is the Crowne of her Husband.*

CHAP. I.

Containing Questions concerning Salomon, *the Author of this Scripture upon which the ensuing Treatise is written by way of Commentary.*

HAving so small a parcell of this part of holy writ, to handle and passe through, as is contained in these few words which (up- The Preface.

on the presented occasion) I have read unto you, it is not my purpose or meaning, to put my selfe to much busi-nesse, or to take up your attention about the generalities of the whole booke of the *Prouerbs*, insisting in any ample or tedious preamble, eyther concerning the *Author*, or the *Matter*, or the *Methode* of the same; onely in a word or two, (for introduction to our Text) it shall not be amisse, to give you a little light; touching each of them, remember therefore, and receive in briefe thus much.

The authour of the *Proverbs* was *Solomon*.

The *Author* of this booke was *Solomon*, the very first verse of the first chapter doth signifie so much unto us, it be-

being intituled [THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.] And if we ſhall examine *what*, and *who* he was, upon due ſearch, hee will ſoone be diſcerned, to be one of the happieſt men that ever was borne of women, whether wee conſider him in his *temporall*, *ſpirituall*, or *eternall*, eſtate.

His threefold eſtate.

Touching his *temporall* condition, it was from the beginning very honourable, and in the progreſſe thereof, hee grew to be exceeding admirable. By *birth* he was *a Kings Sonne*, and after, by *Succeſſion* hee became *a King himſelfe*; yea, *a King of Iſrael* (the onely nation which the Lord did honour and chuſe out to be *his Church and Kingdome*, *his peculiar people*, *and*

Temporall

Eccleſ. 1. 1. 12.

Exod 19. 5, 6.

Deut. 29. 18.

1 King 10. 23.

chiefe treasure) and of all the Kings of Israel, hee was the most renowned; & excelled *in riches, in royaltie*, and in all other *regall eminencies* whatsoever; all that swayed the kingly scepter, eyther *before* the *division* and *renting* of the kingdome, or *after*.

Math. 6, 22.

Spirituall.

In his *spirituall* estate hee was inferiour to none, whom hee exceeded in his *temporall*. How many love-tokens did the Lord bestow upon him, even from his *birth*. Nay, *before his birth*, *did* not GOD make many *sweete promises* (*as presages* of him) to his Father? and some also to himselfe afterwards? *Did* not God give him both his names of PEACE and LOVE? SOLOMON,

2 Sam. 7. 12.

1 King. 9. 4. 5.

1 Chron. 2. 9
2 Sam. 1. 25.

MON; signifying PEACEMAKING; IEDIDIAH, signifying BELOVED OF THE LORD? Had hee not a heart of most gracious disposition, when it being in his choyce what he would desire, *hee asked Grace, rather then Riches, or any Earthly advantage under Heaven?* Did hee not receive (accoring to his requeſt) an *admirable and unmatchable meaſure of extraordinary wiſedome and underſtanding?* whereby he did mannage his mighty affaires, distributing *mercy* and *iuſtice* in a proportion most equall among his people, *to their owne and ſtrangers aſtoniſhment?* Was he not set on worke by the Lord himſelf in *two peerleſs imploiments? viz*, the building of *Gods most*

What *Solomons* name ſignifieth.

2 Chron. 10, 11, 12.

1 King 3. 28. & 1 King. 4. 29. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34.

SOLOMONS praiſe enlarged.

1 King. 10. 6, 7, 8.

1 Chron. 22. 9, 10, 11.

rions Temple, the materiall *frame*, the artificiall *forme*, and all the *ceremoniall offices*, *ordinances*, and *adminſtrations* whereof, were entruſted upon him to order and diſpoſe, according to the minde and commandement of *God* (to him alone) in that behalfe revealed? which when hee had accordingly performed, the Lord ſet him upon a ſecond, and more excellent ſervice, and made him one of his *principall Secretaries*, among thoſe *holy ones*, which were peculiarly aſſigned of God, and divinely inſpired, to be the *Pen-men of the Sacred Scripture*, three bookes whereof, and one *Pſalme*, (as ſome doe very *probably*, if not *certainly* conclude) doe beare his

SOLOMON thought to be the author of Pſalm. 127.

his name, and the leaſt of the three, is affirmed (by ſome of profound judgement) to be *a myſticall and moſt excellent Prophecy*. Laſtly, was he not ſundry waies a notable type and ſhaddow of *Ieſus Chriſt, our Lord, the Prince of peace, and beloved ſonne of his Father*, whom in many particulars hee moſt manifeſtly repreſented. The *Canticles*. Eſai. 9. 6. Math. 3. 17.

And theſe conſiderations of his moſt excellent qualifications, with a multitude more of very pregnant and obſervable paſſages (not appertaining to us now to enquire into) are they not moſt *evident and abundant confirmation* of his *happineſſe* and *beſt being*, touching *his ſtate eternall*, whereupon notwith- Eternall.

ſtanding, divers, even among *Divines*, have not a little *doubted*, but *demurr'd* much, as if it were within any *poſſibility*, yea, or *probability* to be concluded, *that ever any hypocrite, or reprobate could partake in theſe extraordinary prerogatives, to be thus foretold, thus intituled, thus qualified, thus employed, thus every way honoured, as wee* have ſeene hee was.

The Matter of the Proverbes.

Now from the *Authour* of theſe *Proverbs*, wee may put on to the *Matter* of them, which, what it is, the forenamed *Inſcription*, or *Title*, doth tell us, *a Booke of* PROVERBES, or PARABLES. And whereas the Booke of GOD doth mention to us, ſundry ſorts, and ſeverall kindes

kindes of *Parables* and *Proverbs*, this booke comprehendeth in it ſelfe, and delivereth out unto us ſome of each ſort and kinde, it being *an admirable Nurſery of all divine variety, a holy mixture of heauenly matter contrived into wonderfull brevity*, yet with *apparant perſpicuity*, albe it, there be ſuch abundance and plenty, couched and encloſed in ſo little compaſſe.

The *Matter* of the booke being manifeſt, we may alſo acquaint our ſelves with the *Methode* of the ſame: which in *the firſt nine Chapters*, is evidently differing from the reſt ſucceeding, for whereas *They* are *Rhetorically diſcurſive* and dependant

The Methode of the Proverbes in generall.

in their particulars, being ful of all *gracious counſells* and *ſweet encouragements to all good*, back't & abetted with *ſound inducements* and *ſtrong provocations of reaſon*; as alſo *ſerious diſſwaſives* from *dangerous evills*, having *heavenly caveats* and *wholeſome preſervatives*, annexed to arme and enable us againſt them: *The* reſt of the chapters to the laſt, doe conſiſt moſt (if not wholly) of a *maruellous multiplicity of various and independent ſentences*, every chapter being (as it were) a *Treaſury* of it ſelfe, affording us much and manifold heavenly matter, *even ſomething of every thing*, that might further us in our practice, to follow things that are *holy in themſelves*, and *hap-*

py to us, deterring (alſo) and affrighting all hearts, from all actions, *impious*, in their *nature pernitious* to vs, and *accurſed* of *God*, that ſo wee might be made wiſe to walk *accurately*, or *exquiſitely* in the way that leads us unto eternall life. Epheſ. 5. 15.

It were no ſmall difficulty to bring the particulars of every chapter, (there being ſo little coherence) into an ordinary, and orderly diſtribution, onely we may reduce them al to theſe three heads, or kinds, that follow. The methode in particular.

The proverbs of *Solomon* contained in twenty chapters, from the ninth to the end of the thirteenth, (*wee take in thoſe of Augur to cap.* 29.) comprehend matter, whereof:

whereof: Some is POLITICALL, such are all *Proverbiall instructions* as appertaine to *Kingdomes*, *Monarchies*, and all other *mighty states civill*, for the well managing of the *eminent affaires of men*, in that most *publike* and most *principall* society betweene *Soveraignes* and their *Subiects*, *Princes* and their *People*: Some is OECONOMICALL containing informations for families, (a farre inferiour society to the former) that every sort of *Superiours*, and *Inferiours*, might be well ordered to each other, such as are the *Husband* and the *Wife*, *Father* and *Childe*, *Master* and *Servants*, every one of whose duties and directions are delivered

1 Politicall.

2 Oeconomicall.

and laid downe in many places. Some is PERSONALL, instructing all ſtates and ſorts of men ſeverally, how to demeane themſelves in their private condition, in al paſſages of their converſation, both before the *Lord* in things *divine*, and before *men* in matters of the world. And in ſome one of theſe three ſubjects, is every *chapter* taken up, and unto theſe the particulars of them all haue their proper reference, as the wiſe and heedefull Reader may obſerve.

3. Perſonall.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Reasons why Solomon *so enlargeth himselfe in the commendation of a vertuous wife. Together with a Doctrine drawne from the Coherence and order of the Text.*

Entrance into the discourse.

THese things being thus premised, wee may now the better thinke upon the way to our Text. which being one of these famous *Proverbs*, belongeth to the *second* sort of matter before mentioned, to wit, that which is for the family, for, (you see) it treateth of a *Wife*, which is the *best member thereof* (for the *Husband* is the

the *head*, both of *her*, and the *house* too) telling us, that such a *Wife* one may have, as may be *a Matrimonial Crown*, to him, who is the *Occonomicall Head*. And certainely, it is well worth our noting to obserue, how abundant and copious *Solomon* is in this subject of a *Wives discouery*, both in these *Proverbes*, and in that other booke of his, entituled, *Ecclesiastes*. Surely, some reason may be conceiued, why he should say *more* then every man in this matter, doubtlesse there is something in it, that hee doth so insist upon it: to say the truth, hee had a double Schoolemaster to teach him this one lesson, and indeede hee learned much of them both

The reason why *Salomon* is so plentifull in this subiect of the *Wifes* discouery.

both; hee was taught, not onely by *divine inſpiration* from GOD, but alſo by *deare experience* of his *owne*, both which, made him able to ſpeake ſo plainly in this particular, as he hath done.

What Solomon ſaith of Woman.

All that hee ſaith, and inſiſteth upon, is, *either* the uncovering of the *ſinfulneſſe* and *ſhame* of the *evill and adulterous woman*, that her *filthy nakedneſſe* appearing, ſhee may be *abhorred* of all men; *Or* the *commendation* of her that is *good and gracious*, that ſhee might be *manifeſted* in her excellency, and men might be enamoured with her.

Of the evill.

Of the former, hee makes *plenary diſcovery*, and doth detect *all*, and *every* of her *ſubtile ſleights* and *dangerous devices*,

devices, whereby ſhee *ſeduceth*, as alſo the *damnable euents* of them, to ſuch as are *ſeduced* by her, that ſo *ſhe* and her *ſnares*, may be diſcerned, and had in due *execration*, and *loathing* of all men, who by want of this wiſdome might be *bewitched* with her.

Of the latter we have a *delineation* both of *her ſelfe*, and all *her ſingular qualities*, that every man may know the *worth of a gracious Wife*, how *excellent* ſhe is in *her ſelfe*, and how *cõmodious* and *comfortable* (every way) to *him* that doth obtaine her, to the end ſhee might be carefully ſought of thoſe that want ſuch a one, and much ſet by, and in precious account with all, who are ſo happily ſped. Of the *good*

And

And ſurely, *Solomons* extraordinary endeavour and diligence, in the declaration of the *beſt* and *worſt* of *wives*, ariſing, (as was obſerved) not onely from Gods *inſpiration*, but alſo *from his owne experience*, eſpecially, in that he ſpeakes touching *the evill woman*, doth (by the way) give us to underſtand, and imitate, a good leſſon, which (herein) his practice teacheth us, and that is this. *That in what evills ſoever wee have beene moſt foule, and fallen into, to the greateſt diſhonour of God, and into practice moſt ſcandalous before men; for them wee muſt be extraordinarily humbled, and witneſſe our repentance, by the ripping up of the bottome and bowels of the ſame, not hiding, or ſparing*

The Doctrine from the coherence.

ſparing, any thing that lyeth in our power to lay open, to the full information of others touching the nature of that impiety, and the notorious perill thereof. No man more groſſe then *Solomon* in this one ſinne, and behold, he who was the *greateſt trangreſſor* in it, is now become the *beſt Schoolo-maſter*, both to *keep* men *out*, that are in danger to be overtaken, and to *get* men *out*, that are already intangled in the miſerable ſnares of *the wicked woman.*

And as he hath done this, ſo would it well become us to doe, in any impiety that getteth power & domination over us, *the fouleſt practitioner* of it, muſt be *the faithfulleſt Preacher* againſt it; the Lord

Note.

Lord lookes, that hee who hath moſt injured & wounded his honour, by his evill practice, ſhould bee moſt willing, and watchfull to *heale* it in himſelfe, and *helpe* to gaine it in others by witneſſing to the world, the woefull ſtate of the *ſinne*, and the pittifull plight of the *perſons* that are caught in the ſame. *True repentance* will reproach ſinne to the uttermoſt, and make it as loathſome to others, as it was beloved of our ſelves. So did *Solomon* here; ſo muſt *all Saints* doe for ever.

Solomons wiſdome meeteſt to diſcover *Womans* eſtate, whether *good* or *bad*.

But let us returne: by all that is ſaid by him, of both ſorts of Wives, or Women, I wel ſee, it will ſet the wiſdome of *Solomon* a worke, (and

(and finde it worke enough too) to ſet forth, and diſcover the compleate ſtate of *a good Wife*, and *an euill*, they that are *naught*, being ſo *extremely bad*, and *unſpeakably miſchieuous*, that an ordinary wit will not lim them out, and they that are *good*, ſuch exceeding and unmatchable mercies, as cannot be ſufficiently diſcovered by any, but either by the LORD that made them, or, by *ſuch men* as from him have enjoyed them. The *wiſdom* of heaven, and the *wiſeſt* on earth are fitteſt, to decypher both theſe before us.

But wee will let the *wicked Woman* paſſe for the preſent, ſeeing the words of our Text, treate of no other

other but of her that is *excellent*, and no other Text (that I know) speakes more of her excellency then ours, for it saith, she is the *Crown* of him that hath her, so wee reade, [*A vertuous VVoman is the Crowne of her Husband.*] Vnto the more particular and plenary consideration, of which words, let us now draw neere, and settle our selves to the search, and survey both of the true *interpretation*, *division*, and *instruction*, that mey be found in them.

The oder of handling the words.

Interpretation.

And first for *Interpretation*, let us seeke out their sense by a particular exposition of every word in his owne order.

A *Woman*, touching this first

first word [*Woman*] we will not ſtand upon any *curious* notation of this name (by which ſhee was named) or play with the word, eyther in the *originall languages*, or in the *latine*, or in our *owne tongue*, as it is the manner of too many, who over-affect niceties, to invent vanities, and then to vent them to the world. This ſinfull dalliance with ſacred things wee (worthily) account deteſtable in Iewes, and can it be tolerable in Chriſtians? They not knowing the meaning of the ſpirit, like blind men grope the letter, and would faine feele that in the *ſyllables* of a word, which the Lord hath laid up in the *ſenſe*, and made

It is a ſinne to dally with holy things.

matter

matter of faith: in defect whereof, their dotages are notorious and wonderfull; into which (or some such, or some worse) they fall who incline to the same course, and take pleasure in things that cannot profit.

The *Woman* had 3. names.

That which we may safely receive for truth, (touching the particular now in hand) is this: that the Woman had three names, *one* given her of God, who made her; other *two* of *Adam*, of whom, and for whom shee was made.

One of *God*.

That which GOD gave her, was the same he gave him [ADAM] a common name to them both, because the earth was the common matter of both their bodies.

Here-

Hereof the holy Ghoſt is witneſſe, in that hee ſaith [*he called their name* ADAM.] And hence it is, that (even in this regard) all *Man-kinde* and *Woman-kinde*, and the poſterity of them both, are often called ADAM, as we find very frequently in the *Pſalmes*, in every of which, what wee read of *man*, or *the Sonne of man*, is generally to be taken, as intended of both *ſexes*, the words, (and their meaning) being as true of *women*, as *men*, in as much as the bodily condition of them both, *materially*, is all one, being made *glorious* and *immortall*, at the firſt, by GODS creation, but having made themſelves ignominious, and ſubject to vanity through their owne rebellion.

Gen. 5.1.2.

Pſalm. 8.4.

Pſalm. 39.6.

Pſalm. 49.2.

Pſalm. 42.9.

The names that ADAM

Two of *Adam* (no queſtion but by Gods direction) gave her, were *two*, and both proper to her ſelfe, as the other was common to both.

The firſt of her *ſexe*. *The firſt* of the two, is that which wee call [WOMAN] the name of *her ſex*, (as the former was, of her *ſubſtance*) and as ſhee was taken out of him, ſo is her name, of his name, WOMAN of MAN in Engliſh; (*Iſchah*, of *Iſch*) in *Hebrew*, and (among the old *Latines*) VIRA (a word now worn out of uſe) of VIR. WOMAN is as much as *ſhee-man*, or *manneſſe*, a piece, or part of a man, and therefore called *Woman*, as the man himſelfe gives the reaſon of the appellation. As for that common fancy of *Woman*, becauſe ſhe was a WOE to MAN, it is but a *groſſe*

Gen. 2. 23.

Engliſh

Engliſh gloſſe, *groundleſſe* and *fruitleſſe*, yea, *ſinfull* and *ſenſeleſſe*. being, contradictory to Gods intention in the end of her creation (which was mans welfare) and carrying onely a verball conſonance of *ſound* in our language, but no *ſoundneſſe* of truth that can be concluded, in ours, or any other tongue, from any ſuch fond, and idle etymologie, flowing from *ſome mens diſcontent*, not from every *VVomans deſert*.

The latter was HEVAH, a name, neither of her nature, nor ſexe, but of her fruitfulneſſe, as the reaſon annexed doth evidence, *becauſe*, *ſaith* Adam, *ſhee was the Mother of all living*, this her name HEVAH, ſignifying in our Engliſh, nothing but LIFE or LIVING. The ſecond, her fruitfulneſſe. Gen. 3. 20.

Woman, what it ſignifieth.

But on the word WOMAN, we will not inſiſt, or dwell, it is more meete wee ſhould inquire what *woman* our Text doth containe and intend, and this wee ſhall the more eaſily and evidently diſcerne, if we take notice that the Scripture doth under this word [WOMAN] comprehend, and deliver out unto us, more things then one, the ſundry ſorts whereof, will appeare, if wee endeavour wiſely to diſtinguiſh the ſame in the ſeverall ſenſes it hath in the Scripture.

Three ſorts of *Women*.

The Booke of God maketh mention of *Women* of divers kinds, but al of them (If I miſtake not) may be reduced to one of theſe heads, eyther the *Myſticall Naturall*, or *Matrimoniall* Woman.

The

The *Mysticall* Woman, is found in the Scriptures to be the embleme or representation of *good* and *evill*; The sacred and beloved Spouse of Iesus Christ (consisting *of innumerable both men & women*, in whom the Lord taketh pleasure, and his soule delighteth in her, as in his *faire one*, who is *all glorious within*; is called a *Woman*, as hee that readeth and considereth may see, both by the Prophet *Hosea*, and by Saint *Iohn* in his *Revelation*. The Church malignant also in her filth and impurity spirituall, loathed of the Lord, because she is the [*mother of fornications*] the *bawd* and *Beldame* of all mysticall uncleanesse, the *capitall Quean*, and most *notorious strumpet* of the world, beloved and married of the *Divell*, shee also is

1 The *Mysticall.*

Rével. 7. 9.

Cant 4. 1.

Hosea 3. 1.

Rev. 12. 1, 2.

Rev. 7. & 18.

Rev. 14. 4. cap. 17. 3. called a *VVoman*, by the wife-dome of God, ſpeaking *enigmatically*, or *darkely* (but undoubtedly) of that *Antichriſtian Synogogue*, which being already infallibly detected to be the preſent *Romiſh Church*, Rev. 18. 7. ſhall in due time, (*though ſhee bleſſe her ſelfe in the meane time*) be ruinated, and for ever confounded. Nay, all impiety and wickednes, whether in true or falſe Churches, or *out* of both, Zech. 5. 7. 8 among *Iewes*, *Turks*, *Pagans*, or any *Infidells*, is reſembled by a *Woman* in *Zecharies* viſion. But with this *Woman* wee meddle not, our text hath nothing to do with any thing that is *Myſticall*.

5 The Naturall. The next is the NATVRAL *Woman*, by whom wee underſtand the *man feminine*, or the *female of mankinde*, all the daugh-

daughers of men, are properly called *women*, in what age or eſtate ſoever, whether of infancy, childhood, virginity, matrimony, or widdow-hood, all theſe are *Women*.

3. The Matrimoniall.

The laſt is the *woman matrimoniall*, and her alone we call a *Wife*, being a *woman under marriage*, either onely *initiate*, in termes of *contract* or *betrothing*, (yet called a *Wife* (though a *Virgine* alſo) both in the *old* and *new* Teſtament) or *compleat* and *conſummate*, called *ever* a *Wife*, and *no more* a *Virgine*. For though to be called a *wife*, and a *virgin* do well accord, to her that is only affianced, yet are they oppoſed as *incompatible* to her that is *fully married* (by the *Apoſtle*) who treateth of both, and doth in this māner diſtinguiſh them.

Deut. 22. 24.

Ioel 1. 8.

Math. 1. 18.

1 Cor. 7. 37.

And this is the *Woman* wee are to ſpeake of, to wit, the *Naturall woman*, conſidered in her *abſolute Matrimoniall condition*, endued with *celeſtiall qualification*, even with *piety* and *holineſſe*, *grace* and *goodneſſe*, the notice whereof offereth it ſelfe unto us in the next word; a Woman *of ſtrength*.

Of STRENGTH] we rather read it thus, then (as uſually it is read) *a vertuous woman*, becauſe, (though no other then the *vertuous* can be heere underſtood) this reading is more *litterall*, according to the *originall Text*, and better ſorteth (in the beſt ſenſe of the word) with the ſetting out, and delineation of ſuch a one as the *Holy Ghoſt* doth meane in this place to make knowne unto us.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Severall kindes of Crownes, and the singular blessing of a good wife, as also the great crosse and curse of a bad one, with other notable matters which ensue.

IN Holy Writ, we finde this phrase or forme of speach affirmed of such persons as were thought fittest to be *eminent* and meet to *order* & *mannage*, (as Magistrates) *the publike good of the whole people. Iethro the father in law of Moses*, doth advise him, for the ease of himselfe, and the more equall administration of Justice among those over whom GOD

What is true strength.

had entrusted him; *to chuse out* and select from among them, such, as they should find to be [*men of strength*] and these hee describes (that all men might know the men he meant) to be such *as were endowed with those graces which might enable them to beare rule in all important businesse, and also free from those evills which in all men are accounted hatefull*, but in Magistrates, *hellish*. So that every one may see, that by *a man of strength* GODS spirit meaneth *a man of piety*, and *uprightnesse*, of *grace* and *good parts*, one that being *a good man*, may also (by the strength of grace appearing in him) become *a good Magistrate*. The *strength* here, and in our Text, not signifying, eyther *onely*, or *principally*, *the created*

Exod. 18. 21, 25.

ted vigor, or naturall ability of the bodie, (a quality, common to beasts with men) but *the ſpirituall vertue, or power of God renewed in the ſoule and body, by which both are ſupported againſt the power and domination of ſinne,* which *ſinne* of ours, is properly *our ſpirituall weakeneſſe,* the trueſt impotency, and imbecillity that is in us, ſeeing it is a degeneration *from,* and a privation *of, that ſtate of grace,* which we once enjoyed *in Adam,* wherein, and whereby, he had ſtrength & ability (*and hee might have kept it if hee would*) to have ſuſtained *himſelfe* and *us,* againſt the *rage* and *poyſon* of all *impurity* whatſoever, and to have ſtood in *holy* and *happy perfection of nature,* and *grace,* to this moment: fromwhich excellency, ſeeing

What is true weakneſſe.

we are declined, and have let our glory goe, the Lord, when he ſpeaks of us now, doth deſcribe us to be moſt *fraile* and *impotent creatures*, ſuch is the Apoſtles phraſe [*while we were yet of no ſtrength*] which manner of ſpeaking, being clearely oppoſite to this in our text, (and noting out our *ſtate of corruption* and *impiety*, (as is plaine in the next words) doth evidently expound GODS mind and meaning to be thus much; That by *a VVoman of ſtrength*, hee would have us to underſtand *a Woman of Grace*, one in whom holineſſe prevaileth, and prepareth her to be the true glory of him that hath her, that hee may finde her truly comfortable and beneficiall to himſelfe, and his family; ſuch a *woman of ſtrength* is

Rom. 5. 6.

A VVoman of ſtrength is a woman of grace.

is in this Text *intended*, and in the laſt *Chapter* of this booke, *from the tenth verſe, to the end*, (by many goodqualities, both *civill* and *ſpirituall*) at large deſcribed. This glory of hers, and honour of her *Husband*, by her goodneſſe, doth iſſue from the next word CROWNE.

A Woman of ſtrength IS *the* CROWNE] IS] that is to ſay, *is like*, identity, is often affirmed in the *letter*, where no more then ſome ſemblance or ſimilitude is meant in the *ſenſe*, many inſtances might be giuen, wherein things are *literally* ſaid to be *this*, or *that*, when as onely ſome *likeneſſe* thereunto is to be underſtood.

THE CROWNE] there are ſeverall acceptations of this word, but all the *Crownes* wee can finde mentioned in the

Two kinds of *Crownes*.

the *Bible*, are of two kinds, eyther *proper*, or *metaphoricall*,

One proper.

Properly, *a Crowne is the Royall ornament*, or *ornament of Royaltie*, which being the glorious ensigne of Majesty & Soveraignitie, is to bee worne onely of Kings, and such as have prerogative of supreme Jurisdiction and imperiall authority over peoples and nations. And this is the native meaning of the word, as may be seene in many places that might be alledged.

Psalm. 21.4. and 132.10.

Many *Metaphoricall*.

Metaphorically, or, in a borrowed sense, a *Crowne* comprehendeth within the compasse therof, whatsoever extraordinary dignity or pre-eminence God doth bestow upon a man to make him glorious in any good, whether in things *Temporall*, *Spirituall*, or *Eternall*.

In

In *Temporall* ſtate, many things are called *Crownes*: *Age* it ſelfe, and the *grand-children of the aged* are *Crownes*. The GARLAND or LAVREL *of him that prevaileth* and is *victorious* in his enterprize, is ſaid to be the CROWNE of *him that ſtriveth*. The affluence or abundance of all fruites, through the fertilty of the ſeaſon, is ſaid to be *the Crowne of the Earth*. In a word; all the preſent bleſſings which the Lord doth in any eminent, and abundant meaſure, beſtow upon any, beyond the common ſtraine of mens ordinary eſtate, in *riches*, in *reputation*, or any earthly *favours* are alſo called a CROWNE, as is moſt cleare in IOBS complaint, who lately enjoying, but now want-

Temporall *Crownes.*

Prov. 16.31. and 17.6.

2 Tim. 2.5.

Pſalm. 65.12.

wanting all these, being deprived of them, and brought into deep distresse, he bewayled his woefull estate thus: [*He hath taken my* CROWNE *from my head*] that is to say, all my riches and prosperity, all my renowne and glory, all my wealth, all my worth is lost and gone.

Iob 19.9.

Spirituall *Crownes.*

In *Spirituall* state, all heavenly comforts, with the *causes*, *meanes* and *effects* of them are intituled *Crownes*. So the Lord is said to [CROWNE *his people with mercy and compassion*] hee being the *cause* from whom it is communicated freely unto us. So the *Church* mournfully bemoaneth the death of good *Iosiah*, who was the *meanes* of their best good, saying, [*The* CROWNE *of our head is fallen.*] So *Paul* having

Psalm. 103.4.

Lam. 5.16.

graci-

gracious and prosperous successe in the effect of his ministery among the *Thessalonians*, he telleth them, *ye are my* CROWNE: and so in the same manner hee speaketh to the *Philippians*. 1 Thes.2.19. Phil.4.1.

In our *Eternall* state, wee read of a CROWNE, *of life and immortality*; of a CROWNE *of Righteousnesse*; of a CROWNE *of glory*. By all which are meant those eternall, inconceivable and infinit felicities which *Christ* hath purchased, and all true Christians shall possesse with him in the highest heavens, where he (our King) *is already crowned with all glory and honour*, and we his subjects, (*being made Kings by him*) shall, in due time, be for ever and ever *crowned* with him. Eternall *Crownes.* Iam.1.12. Rev.3.10. 1 Tim.4.8. 1 Pet.5.4. Psalm.8.5. Hebr.2.9. Revel.1.6. Revel.5.10.

Now

What *Crowne* the Text doth intend.

Now, amidst all the multiplicity of *Crownes*, our Text intends a *temporall*, to wit, that which is *Coniugall*. And *Solomon*, who assures us, that *a good Wife* is such a *Crowne*, would have us to know thereby, that shee is a *wonderfull favour*, and a *marvellous honour*, to a man (being unto him his *glory*, and his *ioy*) and that, hee that hath gotten such a one may (in good sense) be said to be *Crowned of* GOD *in marriage*, as before, the yeare was said *to be crowned with mercy*. And that this exposition was the minde of SOLOMON, (or rather the meaning of the Holy Ghost) appeareth, not onely out of the fore-named allegations, but also from the opposite part (*or antithesis*) of the Text, in the residue of this

Psalm. 65. 12.

twelfth

twelfth verſe, wherein in *an evill Wife* is ſaid to be a *mans infamy*, a *reproach* to him *outwardly*, and moreover, a *ſecret plague*, even as a *worme*, or *rot-tenneſſe* to him *inwardly*, which doth (at once) both extremely paine, and utterly conſume *him* who is woefully wedded to her: called in the laſt word of thoſe wee have read, her *Husband*.

What an *evill Wife* is to a *Man*.

Of her HVSBAND] which name, or appellation, is both *taken* up by God himſelfe, and by him *given* to ſome men. He *taketh* it, and intituleth himſelfe a HVSBAND, when he is pleaſed to have reference to *his people* in their *Church-eſtate*, conſidering them in their *Holy Communion* they have *with him*, and (*in him*) with one another, and theſe

Two ſorts of *Husbands*.

Iſai. 54. 5.

these he saith, *hee will marry*
Hos.2.19.20. *in everlasting love, and faithfulnesse to himselfe.* Hee *giveth* it unto *some* men, (as wee noted before the name *Wife* was given to *some women,*) to all such as are in *part entred,* or have *wholly entertained a Matrimoniall* condition. A man in marriage *incompleate*, is stiled a
Ioel 1.8. *Husband* (though his *matrimony* be *not consummate*) as well as they who are *absolutely married.*

And thus having sounded these words (though too shallowly) and examined every of them a-part, wee have found their severall meaning. Now
The joynt meaning of the words. if joyntly and briefly, any man desire to have the sense of them all, summed up together, we may thus receive the same. [*A Woman, or Wife, that*

is

is endued with heavenly graces from God, is a ſurpaſſing favour, and ſingular bleſſing to the Man that hath her, her graces being the greateſt grace and glory to him, that hee can have among the mercies of this life, ſhee Crowneth him with renowne, and ioyes him with comfort, beyond all other earthly bleſſings.]

So much for the expoſition of the words.

Their *diviſion* is the next thing we have to doe, wherein (there being no difficulty) we will be briefe. The parts are eaſie and perſpicuous: all that we can perceive, and doe purpoſe to proſecute in them, doth draw it ſelfe, and is comprized under a double conſideration. Diviſion.

Eyther, that is, which is *ioynt* and *generall*, in all the words taken More generall.

taken together, and ſo they containe the due commendation of a good *Wife*.

Particular in foure parts.

Or, that which is *particular*, and *ſeverall*, if wee take the whole in pieces, and then wee finde theſe parcells.

Firſt, the party commended [*a Woman.*]

Secondly, the cauſe of her commendation, not every *Woman*, but ſhe that is gracious, hath this applauſe, [*a Woman of ſtrength.*]

Thirdly, the amplification of her praiſe and commendation, in that, under which (in the reſembled excellency whereof) ſhe is ſet forth [*is the Crowne.*]

Fourthly, the party to whom this her rare worthineſſe hath proper reference, [*of her Husband*] who is the onely man that

that receiveth this matchleſſe mercy by her.

Or, if any doe affect a neerer way, and would make a ſhorter cut through the words, he may quickly apprehend her, [A KING and A CROWNE] a *holy Woman* the CROWNE; a *happy Man*, the KING, here vertues doe *crowne her before God*; ſhe doth *crowne him before men*; ſhee being thus *qualified*, he by her, is thus *honoured*; and ſo, *they both*, (in this eſtate) are truely *bleſſed*. Briefely in few.

Now, ſeeing we have attained the underſtanding of the words, and doe alſo perceive their parts; let us paſſe forward toward the *inſtructions* ariſing out of them, thus *interpreted*, and *divided*. *Inſtructions.*

And in the firſt place, wee muſt enquire what may be learned

learned in the more generall ſcope and conſideration of them as they lye, and are couched all together. And that is thus much.

Doctrine. That in aſmuch, as a *Woman* of grace is called *her Husbands Crowne*, wee hence have this leſſon for our learning. That [*A good Wife is the Husbands beſt outward bleſsing.* She *is the worthieſt mercy that a man can have in this world.*

No earthly favour appertaining to our *preſent temporary ſtate*, is *beyond*, or *equall* to her: none is *better*, or *greater*, nay, none is ſo *good*, or ſo *great*; yeelding ſuch *honour*, *ioy*, *advantage*, and *contentment*, as a *worthy Wife* doth. Among *tranſitory* kindneſſes, ſhee is the moſt *tranſcendent*.

The Holy Ghoſt, who doth

ſo

ſo highly commend her in theſe words, doth warrant us to avouch thus much for evident truth, and will beare us out in it, it being undoubtedly evinced, and clearely concluded from this appellation of [*a Crowne*,] which, being a word *uſed* in Scripture, and *borrowed* of God, to expreſſe benefits of *rare*, *and extraordinary excellency*, it can repreſent none other, but ſuch as are like unto it ſelfe, even ſuch as are *peere-leſſe*, *prize-leſſe*, and *invaluable*, and therefore, the *Wife* wee ſpeake of, can be no leſſe. So that that by her repreſentation here, ſhee is an *incomparable comfort*, *a favour* that hath no *fellow*, or that can be matched, or mated, in this world. Hee that calleth her a *Crowne*, would have us con-

ceive and beleeve thus much.

A *Crowne* (wee know) is the *higheſt* and *moſt honourable* thing, that is to be found under *heaven*; the *meaneſt* and *worſt matter* of it, is the *beſt* and *moſt fine gold*, the *ornaments* that doe beautifie it, are the *rareſt*, and *richeſt precious ſtones* and *pearles*, that can be gotten, if any one may be found that doth excell all other in *luſtre*, and *brightneſſe*, being more *orient*, of better *beauty*, and of greater *perfection*, then any other, the more *unmatchable* it is, the more *meete* is it to be added to the *Crown* for the adorning of the ſame. *A Crowne* is *a collection or compoſition of the rareſt and richeſt royalties that can be gotten*. And ſuch, (in ſemblance and ſimilitude) is a *vertuous Wife*. Shee is her

A *Crowne*, what it is.

Huſ-

Husbands Crowne, the *happiest treasure* hee can have, that hath obtained her. Things compared, or represented, doe often, (if not ever) *exceed* their *representation*, seldome, or never doe they *come short*, neither (in reason) should they, seeing the things wherunto they are compared, are but *shaddowes* of their excellency.

And as this truth is abundantly evident from our Text, so might wee, most easily fetch further confirmation thereof, frō divers other texts of Scripture, but many shall not need, to that which is so manifest. Let us onely ad one more, even that which offereth it self unto us in the last *chap.* of the *Proverbs*. Therin, *Solomons mother* (amidst many other most heavēly instructiōs) acquaints Prov. 31. 10.

him, with the very particular, wherwith *he himselfe* acquainteth us, commending her *then* to him in *plaine termes*, whom hee commendeth to us *here* in *metaphoricall*. From the *tenth verse* to the *end of the Chapter*, this subject is largely insisted upon. In the *tenth verse*, she is magnified as a thing *wonderfull rare*, and *unspeakably rich*.

1 Rare.

Rare, in the first words, of interrogation [*who shall find?*] as if she were, (as indeed she is) hardly, and without extraordinary difficulty to be found.

2 Rich.

Rich, in the latter words of the same *verse*, she being affirmed farre to exceede the *carbuncles*, or *rubies*: [*her price is farre above the carbuncles*] a strange sentence, consisting of such a *gradation*, as is very unusuall.

A great gradation.

1 For note: *First*, that not

not *ſilver* or *gold* is good enough to be once mentioned, when her price is to be pitched: *Secoadly*, that no *one Carbuncle* or *Rubie* (albeit, both are precious ſtones of great price) may ſerve to ſet forth, but *all*, are little enough, (yea, too little) to doe it; For, *Thirdly*, ſhee is not to be *equall*, but above, beyond them all in value, and that: *Fourthly*, not *a little*, or in ſome *ſmall* matter onely, but *farre above* them all, and they all, come *nothing neere* her excellency, in their beſt eſtimate. 2 3 4

And as in this 10th *verſe*, ſhe is thus extolled, ſo in all the reſt, *to the end* is her worthines laid out at large in many particulars; the *verſes* following verifying that which the *tenth* avoucheth, in the inſtance of

many of her ſingular properties, as will appeare to any, that wil read and peruſe them ſeverally and ſeriouſly.

So that wee now ſee this truth is paſt all controlement, by theſe two Scriptures, both, and eyther of which doe afford us ſufficient aſſurance to acknowledge the ſame, to be cleare without queſtion or controverſie. *Solomon* was a Man, and his *mother* a Woman, and (you ſee) they both combine in it, and are agreed upon it. If a *Man* only had magnified them, *hee* might have bin thought to have ſpoken out of ſome *amourous paſſion*; being willing to get a good one for himſelfe; hee was over forward to ſpeake well of them all, thinking it to be the next way to ſpeede.

If

If *a Woman* onely had given this verdict *ſhee* might have beene ſuſpected of *partiality* and *ſelfe-love* to her ſelfe and her ſexe, that ſhe would praiſe them all ſo highly, for the better preferment of *her owne*. But when *man* and *woman* have both *one minde* and *mouth* to confeſſe it, we may apprehend it to be more then a probable point of truth: but from *this man*, and *this woman* it is beyond all exception, becauſe neither of them ſpeake out of their *owne private affection*, or by their *owne naturall iudgement* (both which might have beene abuſed, and deluded) but by *Celeſtiall and never-erring inſpiration of the* HOLY GHOST, who alone, doth beſt know, how to *rate* and *prize*, any

of his favours unto us, not making them *more* or *leſſe* worthy *to us*, then he hath made them in *themſelves* (by divine endowments) according to which worthineſſe, wee muſt evermore eſteeme of them.

Nothing were more eaſie, then to fill up time with the dition of more teſtimonies, but it would be unprofitable to abound therein, onely we will annex ſome *Reaſons* for the further ratification of it, that wee may underſtand not onely *what is the truth*, but (which is a Chriſtians wiſedome, to diſcern) *why it is true*. And the *reaſons* whereupon wee affirme a faithfull *Wife* to be ſuch a favour, are thoſe that follow.

Reaſons proving a

Firſt, becauſe the LORD doth

doth challenge her as his owne *moſt immediate gift*, given from *his owne hand*, to ſuch as upon whom hee is pleaſed, to beſtow her. Moſt true it is, that hee is the *onely giver of all good things*, as all men muſt acknowledge with the Prophet *David*, and the Apoſtle *Iames*. Howbeit, moſt of thoſe mercies, come *mediatley* unto us, *by men*, and many other *meanes*, *Honour*, *Wealth*, and *Greatneſſe*, may fall upon us, eyther by *Inheritance*, or *Legacie* from other, or by our owne *paines*, and *purchaſe*. But *a gracious Wife*, is *a more ſpeciall gift of* GOD, whoſe love is more extraordinary in *this one*, then in *all other*, ſhee being the *freeſt and faireſt donoation*, of the GOD of Heaven. Sure-

good *Wife* a great favor.

1 Chron 29. 11.12. Iames 1.17.

A gracious *wife* is the freeſt and faireſt guift of God.

ly *Solomon* would faine faſten this upon us; once, and againe hee is upon it. [*He that findeth a Wife* (meaning a *good Wife*, for they that are *wicked ones*, are not worthy to weare this name, or to goe for *wives*) *findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord*] Loe ſhe is the *Lords favour*, and none of his *common kindneſſes, ſuch as houſes and riches*, aud ſuch like, *which deſcend upon us from progenitors*) but a *mercy* whereof hee onely will be the giver, it ſhall be had from no hand, but *his*, this one bleſſing ſhall be out of the worlds poſſibility to beſtow, and this reſervation of her in his *owne* diſpoſition, doth argue her *eminent excellency*, above all other *ordinary advantages*, which *Pagans*, and men *without God*, may

Prov. 18. 22.

Prov. 19. 14.

may compaſſe, and attaine. And this reaſon will be of more validity, if heereunto wee adde, that of *Peter*, who tells us, *that ſuch a VVife is a thing much ſet by of God.* Beloved, there is much in this ſpeech; (*it is a great word*) for I tell you, that ſo much (nay, no ſuch matter) is any where ſpoken, of any other *Temporall* favour. *Gold, pearle,* and *precious ſtones*, are *vile*, and of no worth before him, nothing ſet by; which may be ſeene, in that they ſerve for *meaneſt uſes*, even as *pavements* of a ſtreete, to lye under feete: but hee *ſetteth much* by ſuch a *VVife*, and ſurely, (in all good reaſon) that had neede bee ſome *admirable* thing, whereof GOD thus ſpeaketh. And if hee thus value her,

1 Peter 3.4.

Rev. 21.21.

her, we may well thinke her *invaluable*. There must bee much more then we can imagine, in that which hee sets much by. Where hee sets *any price*, wee may beleeve that mercy is *prize-lesse*.

So that now our first reason is evident, a good *Wife*, is too good for the world to give, and so good, that the LORD doth highly esteeme her, therefore (in as much as neyther of these is incident to *any other*) shee is a blessing that exceedeth *all other* that are externall. That must be the *best favour*, that *thus* comes from the *best giver*.

Reas. 2. The wofull want of a worthy *Wife*

Secondly, the want of such a *Wife*, will evince *her* excellency, and *his* benefit extraordinary, that doth enjoy her.

her. *No want like the want of ſuch a Wife*, for ſhee hath *vertue* in her, to *ſweeten all wants*, and the want of her, will *leaven*, (I had al-moſt ſaid, *poyſon*) the fulneſſe of all other things that hee *can* have, who is without her. Where *ſhee* is not, what is *ſilver*, *gold*, *pearle*, *precious-ſtones*? what are *Crownes*, *Thrones*, *Scepters*, *Kingdomes*, *Monarchies*, *Empires*, *any thing* that can be deſired? heere was one, even SOLOMON (that ſpake this *Proverb*, and many other to the like purpoſe) that ſhall certifie us: hee that had all that heart could wiſh, for *earthly abundance* (as wee heard before) hee was a *Mirrour* both of *Men*, and *Monarchs*, and in regard of his great glo-

Pſal. 24. 7, 8.

ry,

ry, hee was the *true type* of the *King of glory*, and his most glorious Kingdome. Did ever man exceed him in any thing? or was any equall to him, in
Eccles. 2. 10. *revenew*, in *royalty*, in *perfection of all temporall contentment*, wherein all his senses did even *swimme* (if not *surfet*,) as himselfe affirmeth. But what were all these to him, he wanting *such a Wife*, as wee speake of? hee wanted this *Crowne of Matrimony*, to make him truely and throughly happy, in that of his *Monarchie*, the *possession* whereof, with all the appendants of the same aforesaid, were nothing so *comfortable*, as the *privation* of this blessing was *miserable*, hee was in worse case *without her*, *having these*, then hee could have beene *without these*, *having*

ving her, ſhee can make his *poverty* a *pearle* who doth *enioy* her, and his *pearles* may be worſe then *poverty* who cannot *obtaine* her.

But what ſpeake I of *Solomon*, whoſe *evidence* herein, although it be *excellent*, yet (if you wil follow me a little, and give me leave to enlarge this reaſon) I will carry you to his *Better*; even to the firſt man that ever had *Wife*, ADAM in his *innocency* (who, being without *corruption*, did more excel *Solomon*, then he did any that are *corrupt*.) Let us looke upon his *ſtate*, as the Lord layeth it out unto us, and wee ſhall ſoone ſee invincible reaſon to perſwade us fully of the point now in hand. Doe but conſider him, in his *created condition*;

Adam not fully happy, til God gave him a *wife*.

What

Adams happineſſe deſcribed in Paradice.

What hee was, why; hee did conſiſt of a *materiall body*, but as *immortall* as his *ſoule*, which was *divine*, and *immateriall*; *What hee had*; why; all *perfection*, that a creature could receive, his *inſide* full of *ſpirituall*, his *out-ſide* full of *naturall perfections*; both carrying the moſt excellent jmage of God, and hee in both, being *the glory of* GODS *worke-man-ſhip* in this inferiour world: *Where hee was*; why; in *Paradice*, a place prepared, and furniſhed of GOD for his entertainment, ſuch a place as no mans eyes might ever be ſo happy, to behold, but his owne, and they, never after they loſt their happineſſe, they had therein: *What his ſtate was there*; why; a HEAVEN *upon earth*, hee was the LORDS

LORDS LIEVTENANT-GENERALL of the ſame, the *Commander* and *Soverigne*, over all his creatures, who, then (being at their *beſt*) acknowledged him their *better*, receiving their denomination of him, and ſubmitting themſelves to his dominion over them, and doing their homage, moſt readily unto him. In a word: hee was every way, ſo abſolutely happie, that unleſſe a man, had *his perfections*, it is ſcarce poſſible, to make compleate relation, of his *glorious conditions*. But yet in the midſt of all this, harken what the LORD GOD ſaith [*it is not good for Man to be alone*] *One thing it yet wanting*; what is every thing, where this is not? Gen. 2. 18.

Para-

Paradice, and all the prerogatives royall of the earth, are but *one halfe*, (if ſo much) of *mans temporall happineſſe*, the *beſt* bleſſing is yet behinde, *Adam* is *alone*, hee hath not a *Mate*, *a VVoman*, *a Wife*, *to whom* he might communicate himſelfe in *nature*, *with whom* hee might imploy his *Graces*. What are all things to him, while he is *Wiſeleſſe?* (as *Abraham* ſaid of his *great*, and *rich eſtate*, while he was *Child-leſſe*) ſurely *not ſo good*, nay, *nothing ſo good*, as when the LORD had added *his mercy* to him, which was to be the conſummation of the whole comfort and joy of his temporall condition. And that the *VVife* he ſhould have, was indeede *ſuch a bleſſing*, theſe enſuing circumſtances doe cleare-

Gen. 15. 2.

How it appeares that a *wife* is ſuch a great bleſſing.

clearely declare.

First, his Creatour (the moſt wiſe GOD) was the *firſt* that diſcerned this want, and ſpyed out the meanes to mend it, it was the fruit of his wiſedome to take knowledge heereof, ADAM (though in perfection, of underſtanding) apprehended it not, note hence, and obſerve wee, *a good Wife is a more abſolute bleſsing, then could enter mans heart, in his beſt being*, it is a worke, for the unſearchable wiſedome, and unconceivable love of GOD, to ordaine and aſſigne him this favour, adding *her* unto *him*, in all the good hee had before, that with *her*, hee might bee now *abſolute*, in that eſtate, wherein before hee was *admirable*.

1 The wiſdome of God diſcerned *Adams* want of a *Wife*.

Him-

Himſelfe, and all he had, *was exceeding good*, howbeit God ſaith, his ſtate in all this, was not *fully good* till ſhee came, [*it is not good*]

2 No other creature fit to make a helper meet for man, but the *Woman* onel.

Secondly, the God of Heaven having thus reſolved, to honor ADAM and make him *happy*, hee ſummons *all the creatures* hee had made, for mans uſe, and findes not any fit for him, or good enough to bee *this* bleſſing, and yet behold, they were *all good*, lately created and bleſſed of GOD, having no ſavour at all, of *any evill* upon them. Doth not this declare that the whole earth, and all things in it (though in their created excellencie) cannot affoord this favour, and that (*therefore*) ſhe exceedeth them all their beſt?

Thirdly,

Thirdly, the LORD having thus ſearched among all his creatures, and not found ſuch a mercy as hee meant him, hee will now become the ſole founder of this favour [*I will make him a Helper*] the ſame moſt glorious *power*, *wiſedome*, and *goodneſſe*, that was exerciſed in his *owne* creation, ſhall now bee ſet a worke the ſecond time, and employed againe, to make *her*, that ſo ſhee might be knowne, to be no meane mercy to him, the which, rather then *hee* ſhall want for his *full comfort*, or *ſhee* want worth to comfort him *fully*, the Creator will to wore once more. 3 Gen. 2. 18. A faithfull *VVife* is the ſpeciall gift of God.

Fourthly, as *hee* that will make her, ſo, *the matter* whereof ſhee ſhall be made, doth con- 4 No matter meet to make

a Woman of, but the mans body.

conclude her excellency above *all blessings*. She must not bee taken out of the *masse of the earth*, nor *out* of the *body of any creature*, these were *too farre* from his *affection*, *too meane* in *condition*, and in *too much* subjection to yeelde him a *Fellow and a Companion*, which must sit in the second place of his heart, next under GOD, and *things heavenly*, nigher then all (else) that are *earthly*: But *out* of *himselfe* must shee bee built, even out of man, who was *refined earth*, (so her originall matter was better then his) and not out of any part, eyther *at all*, *superfluous*, or *much inferiour*, but of *his Ribbe*, out of his *side*, (a member, which I suppose no man would misse for money,

Mal. 2. 14.

The woman made of purer matter then man.

ney, or ſell another *Ribbe* at any rate) to note, how *neerely equall* with him, how *dearely intimate* to him, ſhe ſhould be; ſo being formed of his *owne fleſh*, built out of his *owne bowells*, ſhee muſt bee *better reputed*, and more *preciouſly reſpected*, then all things elſe.

Fifthly, as the LORD made choyce of the *matter* whereof hee would make her, ſo did hee out of the ſame, (though but *one part* of his body) build her *compleately*, multiplying (by his mighty power) that little matter of ADAMS *one member*, to make her *whole body*, and ſhe having received *her body* of ADAM, her *being* of *God*; GOD himſelfe preſents this *his laſt creature, and mans beſt fa-*

5 One part of man made the womans body.

vour

vour vnto him, and ſets her before him of purpoſe to *grace* her, above *all* other good things.

Laſtly, ADAM being yet in *innocency*, and ſo not ſubject to *errour*, or *dotage in affection*, upon the ſight of her, hee ſayes: *This is bone of my bone, fleſh of my fleſh; therefore* [*a man muſt leave Father and Mother, and cleave to his VVife*] ſhewing, *how neare* to him ſhee was, even of himſelfe: *how deare* to him ſhee muſt bee, beyond *Father* and *Mother*, much more (then) beyond all other comforts. Wee owe *no* naturall affection to our *VVealth*, *Money*, *Cattell*, &c. Wee owe *ſome* naturall affection to *all men*, being of the ſame roote with

What affection we owe:

to Creatures

to Mankinde

to Kindred

to Parents,

to Wives,

with us; we owe *more* naturall affection to *some men*, being of the *same blood with us*, as our *parents* and *brethren*; but the *most* and *best* affection naturall, is due betweene the *Husband* and *Wife*, whom the Lord hath made *one*, and they themselves each others *owne*.

So now, summe up the totall of this reason, if unto *Adam*, the onely *uncorrupted* man, if unto *Solomon* the *most excellent*, among such as were corrupted, the want of a *gracious Wife*, were of such consequence, that the ones *Paradice*, and the others *prehemivence*, was not *absolute*, without her; then the enjoying of her, is the having of the *happiest blessing* under hea-

ven. And ſo I paſſe to the third and laſt reaſon.

Reaſ. 3. *Thirdly*, the contrary of a good Wife, will prove the peereleſſe excellency of her that is good. A *Wife* that is not *gracious*, but *godleſſe*, not *vertuous*, but *vitious*, is the *heavieſt*, yea, the *helliſheſt croſſe*, that can come to a man, no *plague*, no *woe*, to an *impious woman*; a more *peſtilent*, *pernicious*, *miſerable*, *inſufferable evill*, cannot (among *temporall* miſchiefes) be imagined. Our *Solomon*, the *Wiſeſt* man otherwiſe, but this way, the *woefulleſt* man that ever was) ſayes enough to aſſure us hereof. Hee out of his beſt underſtanding, and upon his beſt information whereunto hee

The great evill of an *evill Wife.*

tells

tells us hee applyed himſelfe, and ſearched throughly, to know) ſaith, [*he hath found ſuch a woman more bitter then death*] more bitter then death? What a *word* is this? What a *woe* is that, which deſerves to be ſo ſpoken of? do not theſe words, ſhew as much as wee ſay? yea, more then wee can ſay? is *any calamity* comparable to *that*, which makes *every part of mans life*, more *woefull*, *painfull*, and *perplexed*, then the *pangs* of *death*? The *bad Wife* is no better. [The man that the Lord *loveth*, ſhall be delivered from her, but *the Sinner* ſhall be taken by her] if Gods *loue* and *hate*, lye upon her *poſſeſsion*, or *privation*, (as in *ſome ſort*, Eccl. 7. 25, 1

(but not *finally*) it doth) who can deeme her leſſe, then that which we ſpeake? The LORD ſaid pretty well to her in the *Proverbs*, when hee tells us in one place, a man were better be mewed up in any hole, *in the houſe top*; there to cage, and ſhop up himſelfe perpetually in *cloſe priſon, then to dwell in a large houſe, and be tyed to be her companion.* In another part of the ſame *chapter*, that *it were better being and living in the wilderneſſe among wilde beaſts, then with this woman, venomous, cruell, and inconſpaſſionate* Creatures (whoſe *furie* and *fierceneſſe* is feared, and fled, of all men) are more *ſufferable* then *ſhee*. In a third, that wheras there

Prov. 21. 9.

Verſe 19.

are

are ſome few things that trouble the *whole world*, and are *intolerable to the earth*, *this woman* is *one* of them. But he ſurpaſſeth *all theſe*, in ſaying, *ſhee is more bitter then death*, he inſinuateth that no words can expreſſe the *utmoſt extent* of her evill. Pro. 30. 21, 22.

And if to this his *experiment all aſſertion*, we ſhall adde a *twofold conſideration*, we ſhal better apprehend *her bitterneſſe*. A twofold expreſſion of the *evill woman* evills.

Firſt, the *nearneſſe* and *propinquity* of an evill Wife to a man, being *by* him, *of* him, and *one with* him, no evills are, or can be comparable to thoſe that are ſo *cloſe* to us, that cleave to us, *the farther off*, the *leſſe felt*, but *nearneſſe* and *vicinity* makes an evill 1 By her neerenesse.

ſuperlative. Who could miſchiefe *David* like *Michol?* who (being given as a *ſnare* to him) was thought by his enemy to be the fitteſt, to make him a forlorne man: Who but *Delilah* could have undone *Sampſon*, and delivered him to the *Philiſtins cruelty* and *reproach?* the *more neer*, the *more noyſome*; [*it was thou O man, my familiar friend*] ſaith *David* [*hee that eateth with mee* (ſaith *Chriſt*) *hath betrayed me.*] But to have our deadlieſt, and moſt deſperate evill in the *houſe*, at boord, at *bedde*, and lying in his *boſome*, who can meaſure (ſomuch as in imagination) this mans miſery.

1 Sam. 18. 21.

Pſ. 55. 13, 14.

2. By her perpetuity.

Secondly, as the *vicinitie*, ſo the *perpetuitie* of ſuch a woman,

man, doth further evidence the infinit evill of her, were ſhee never ſo *bitter*, *hard*, or *heavie*, yet a man would make a ſhift to beare out a *brunt*: might it bee but *ſhort*; but *durance*, and *continuance* of a calamity is *tedious*, and makes a man, *heartleſſe* and *hopeleſſe*, And of all that are *temporarie*, what one is ſo *perpetuall* as a *wicked wife*, ſhee is *a croſſe* in *coppi-hold*; during *life* there is no *end* of date or expiration of her evill. If a *child* be a *vexation* to us, wee can *place him out*; If a *ſervant* be *incorrigible*, wee can *turne him out*: But a *bad Wife* (worſe then both) cannot bee ſe ridde, ſhee will *remaine* to bee a *mans miſe-*

rie every moment, and make his whole life so *restlesse* and *wretched*, that a *moment* thereof will seeme a *moneth*, an *houre*, a *yeere*, an *age*, there being no means to remove her. Now then, put these two together, *to have a* NEERE *plague so perpetuall*, a PERPETVALL *plague so neere*, exceedeth all apprehension, hee that is so sped, may well take up *Iobs* words, and say, *My sighing commeth before my meate*] hee shall be likely, if not sure, every day *to breake his heart*, before hee *breake his fast*, and be ever a wishing *the world were at an end* (with himselfe) because of his *wicked Wife*, who is his *endlesse plague*, so long as she lives with him in the

Iob 3.24.

the world, and *worſe then a continuall dropping*, as *Solomon* affirmeth once and againe. Prov.19.13. Prov.27.15.

By both theſe it appeareth how peſtiferous a bad Wife is, if then ſhe exceede all other evills, *a good wife* muſt be a *mercy* equal to this *miſchiefe*; equall, (I ſay) at the leaſt, but (if we remember *one thing*) wee may have reaſon to think a *gracious Woman* a greater *comfort* then a *godleſſe woman* can be a *croſſe*, or *curſe*; and that is this; That whereas the *divell alone* (who is but a creature at the *moſt*, and now curſed and curbed in his *power* & *poyſon*, at his *worſt*) maketh any *woman evill*, it is *God omnipotent and alſufficient* (who can doe whatſoever he wil) that ma- The comfort of *a good wife* is equall to the miſchiefe of an *evill one*.

keth her *good* that is ſo. If therefore the *divell* (who is reſtrained) can yet work upon a *woman*, to make her *mans greateſt evill*, how much more muſt ſhee that is made *good by God*, be his *beſt bleſsing*?

CHAP. IIII.

The uſes of the former doctrine, eſpecially ſuch as concerne the Husband.

The uſes of this point.

AND now, from the *prooſe* of this point, I proceede to the *uſes* of the ſame, that we may *apply* what we have *proved*; *application* is the LIFE of al inſtruction, the DEATH of all corruption. A thing *proved* is TRVE to all, but it is GOOD to none, but only to ſuch as to whom it is *applied*. And

And the *uſes* of this inſtruction do looke every way, and ſpeak ſomething to all ſorts, both of *men* and *women*, *married* & *unmarried*, as we ſhall further ſee in that which followeth. They concerne all ſorts.

Let us begin with *men*, and call upon them all *at once*, in one common duty that doth concerne both *the married*, and the *ſingle*, and then wee will ſpeake of them *aſunder*, in ſuch particulars as pertain to either of them apart. 1. Vſe to all men in one common duty is thankefulneſſe.

Of them all, & of every one of them, as well thoſe that *are*, as that *are not married*, the Lord requireth and expecteth much thankfulnes on this conſideration, *that a good Woman is ſuch an ineſtimable bleſſing* as hath bin declared.

He

He lookes to be acknowledged in this love, and would have us evermore *remember*, that wee are not a little indebted to *his* kindneſſe, *who* hath pleaſed to provide *for us*, creatures that are, or may be ſuch ſingular comforts *unto us*. *Meaner mercies* might have ſerved us, had not his *owne goodneſſe* induced him to be thus abundantly gracious, as out of infinite wiſedome to ordaine a *better favour* for our *beſt welfare*, then any was as yet created. Had hee otherwiſe yoaked us in ſome *inferiour condition*, wee might not have thought our ſelves injured or debaſed by him. But when he would ſo, (as it were) *overflow* in his reſpect of us, and manifeſt

ſuch

ſuch *fulneſſ* of the ſame unto us, that for our ſakes, to doe us greater good, hee would adde unto the worlds fulneſſe (it being already enriched with ſuch plenty, and variety of excellent and incorrupted creatures) *one more*, that ſhould be *farre better* for us, then *all* that were made for our ſervice before, and now begin *another creation*, to accompliſh our *conſolation* in this kinde. What could the Lord *haue done more*, to manifeſt his moſt loving affection unto us? And what can wee *doe leſſe* (in conſideration heereof) then *freely to confeſſe unto him, with moſt gratefull mindes, this great regard hee hath had of our good*, and ſtraine our ſelves to

give

give him *glory*, to the utmoſt wee *are* or *may* ever bee able, becauſe he hath (herein) *done ſo exceedingly beyond all that wee* (nay, that *Adam* in his *innocencie* and *perfection*) *could eyther aske, or thinke.* Let us all, (*by all meanes*) keepe this mighty mercy in moſt carefull commemoration, and never ſuffer the *fruit* of *this* goodneſſe to be *forgotten*, or fall out of our hearts, *eyther* by *utter neglect* of the notice thereof, *or* by our *overſlight conſideration* of the ſame. Both theſe will produce bad effects in both ſorts. In the *married*, that the Lord ſhould not *bleſſe*, but *curſe* this bleſſing to them; in the *unmarried* it wil worke *remiſſeneſſe*, and make them

Epheſ. 3. 20.

Mal. 2. 2.

them ſlacke to begg this favour, which doe not (before hand) duely value it, and ſo provoke the Lord to withhold it, ſeeing they neyther *pray* for, nor *prize* it as they ought. The way; for him that hath a *wife* in poſſeſſion, to be *bleſſed* with her, and for him that hath not, but expecteth ſuch a *one* (that he may be happy when hee ſhall obtaine her) is to honour the LORD *in this one thing*, elſe how can hee but deny them the *good* of that, wherof they deny him the *glory*: Thus much (in a word) by the way to all men.

Our next *uſe* is not ſo *generall* as the former, to *all men*, but *ſpeciall*, to *all husbands*, whether thoſe that are happily ſped

2. Vſe to all Husbands.

sped with such wives, as we speake of, or those that having wives, have the *happinesse of them* yet to come, which is many a mans unhappy estate.

They that have wives, owe double duty.

They that have *found this good thing, and obtained favour of the* LORD to enjoy her, are to be remembred of *double duty*, which they must be most carefull to endeavour unto. *First*, they are to be provoked unto most speciall and *perpetuall gratulation* to the God of Heaven, who, howsoever hee hath made a good Wife such mercy to a a Husband, yet hath not made her *so ordinary to be had, as shee is extraordinarily good*; every man meetes not with her, many more there are, that

1. to God.

A good wife is not an ordinary, but an extraordinary blessing.

that doe *misse* then *speede*, I am sure. And the fewer there are that have them, the greater is the kindnesse of the giver to those that get them: *the lesse common* any cōmodity is, the *more* ought it to be respected, as most *precious* to them, to whom the same is communicated. That man whom the Lords favour finds out, to bestow this blessing upon (among so many that misse of it) is in all reason bound, with all faithfulnes to render unto the Lord, very hearty and extraordinary praise, seeing he hath pick't him out to be made partaker of this *mercy*, among such multitudes of men, as (having Wives) are wofully maried to unknown *misery*. This

Gods ordinary argument to the *Iewes.*

This is Gods argument, ſo often ingeminated to the *Iewes*, in regard of the ſpeciall prerogatives that they onely did partake, & all other people were exempted from, that inaſmuch as they were *his precious people*, *his chiefe treaſure*, *his choſen generation* cull'd out of the whole world to *become his Church*, and *a holy nation* unto him, among whom *hee would ſeate himſelfe*, and *dwell with them*, giving them *his ordinances*, *his oracles*, and all other excellencies, which were appropriated to them, and their poſterity, not dealing ſo with *every*, nor, in their time, *with any nation* elſe; hence *the holy Ghoſt* many a time inferres how full of thankeſgiving

Deut 19.5. Deu. 26.

ving they ſhonld be, and how much they ſhould *magnifie* the Majeſty of that *God*, who had given ſo great good things unto them, when ſo many more mighty nations went without them.

The ſame argument is as good (*my beloved*) in the particular wherof we treat, and enforceth a concluſion of a neceſſary practice upon us, in that praiſe & glory, which is to be given unto him from us, upon the ſame termes he doth challenge it from them, to wit, becauſe wee enjoy, what many others, even the moſt part of man-kinde, doe goe without, GOD ſhould not goe without proportionable thankſgiving at our hands. The ſame to us.

The

The *Patriarke Iacob*, (*their predeceſſor*, and *our patterne* in much good) doth goe before us in an excellent acknowledgement of this kinde, profeſſing himſelfe to be [*unworthy of*, (*or*, *leſſe in worth, then*) *the leaſt of Gods mercies*:] and if he ſay thus, of the *leaſt*, what ſhall we ſay of the *beſt* of Gods favours, whereof we now ſpeake? why ſurely; *as* the *leaſt*, cannot be at all *deſerved*; *ſo*, neyther can the *beſt*, be, (as it ought) *acknowledged*, we want worthineſſe to merit the *meaneſt*, and ability to confeſſe (as we ſhould) the *greateſt*. Ingratitude, is *loathſome* in any caſe, but in extraordinary kindneſſe to be unthankfull, is *execrable*, and ſuch is this,

Gen. 32. 10.

Ingratitude is *loathſome* in any caſe, but herein *execrable*.

I am ſure, and none but ſuch a *ſot*, and *lout* as *Nabal*, (who was a very *monſter* of men, of a *debauſhed* ſpirit, of *ſurly diſpoſition*, of *ſiniſter affection*, whoſe *curriſh* & *churliſh* carriage, preſaged his *overthrow* and *ruine*) could be inſenſible, of the excellency of an *Abigail*, and becauſe he was, the Lord detects him to be ſuch a *groſſe idiot*, ſmites him with *a ſtrange hand of vengeance*, and will not let him live to enjoy that favour, which while he did live, hee could not eſtimate. And where the *like groſſeneſſe* is found in any man, let the *like Iuſtice*, be feared from God, with whom it is moſt righteous, that they ſhould feele his heavieſt *indignation*, 1 Sam. 25. 3.

on, whose hearts are incapable of such heavenly *compassion*.

I could heere course unthankful persons throughly, (and happy were it for them if this *one evill* were *hunted to death* in them) who doe not daily, and duly render to the Lord *his honour*, and *their homage* herein, so solemnly, and intentionally, as the nature of this benefit doth require, but slight his love, in a *seldome*, and *accidentall* confession, such as drops from them, when by occasion they are in company of men that fall in talke of their *wives*, (in their hearing) then (casually) yov shall heare a poore *leane*, and *thinne thanksgiving*, [*I thanke* GOD, *I cannot*

com-

complaine, I have one will ſerve my turne, my Woman is none of the worſt, I can make a reaſonable ſhift with her] with many ſuch *bald* and *bare acknowledgements*. I dare ſay (amoug men) a leſſe reward then *a Pearle*, or *a Crowne*, would much more magnifie the giver in our mouthes, whom wee would not ſpare to *admire*, and *extoll* abroad, applauding that party wherever wee come, that ſhould beſtow ſuch kindneſſe on us; and yet (*ſots*, and *ſenſleſſe* as we are) wee are *baſe niggards*, in *bleſsing* him who hath beene moſt bountifull to us in that one bleſſing which ſurmounteth al theſe, or whatſoever man can give us.

But

But I cannot now insist (as I might) to upbraid those *worthlesse wights*, as *Moses* did the *thankelesse Iewes*, as *Christ* did the *unthankfull Cities*, I leave them, for this evill (if they leave not it) *to men for reproach, to God for punishment*, and by that time they have their *payment* from both, I think it may be hard to say, which of the two the Lord hates most, whether him, whom hee suffereth *to fall into the hand and nets of the wicked woman*, and so to have *a crosse without himselfe*, or him that hath a *good Wife* throwne upon him, and an ingratefull heart, *which is a curse within himselfe*. *Thankefulnesse* is GODS *tribute*, and *due debt*, if wee render it not

Deut. 31. 6.

not, hee can, and will revenge it eyther by *taking this Crowne from our heads*, (as hee did from the King of *Amon*) and set it on anothers, as *Nabals Abigail* was set upon *Davids*; *or by taking us from it in indignation*, as he himself was destroyed. And how is it possible that the hart which *denies God* his due, should *give* the *Wife* hers; whereunto (it being our second duty) we now proceed. 2 Sam. 12. 30.

3

Secondly, the true knowledge of this instruction of the singular worth of a *gracious wife*, tells him who hath her, how he should demeane himselfe towards her, seeing they are *such creatures of God, such comforts of ours*, our carriage towards them The *Husbands* duty towards the *Wife*.

ſhould witneſſe that wee ſo conceive of them; what precious reſpect, deare affection doe they crave, (yea, claime) at our hands: The next love to that which is *totally ſpiritual* and heavenly, (due to Gods ſacred Majeſty, in regard of himſelf, and thoſe eternall favours wherof wee are aſſured from his hand) is this which is *matrimoniall*; it taking place and preheminence *above*, and *before* the affection we beare unto al other earthly things whatſoever: and this is preſſed upon us many wayes: in one word, in one word (I ſay) but many waies.

That one word is [*Love*] which *as* between God and us [*it is the fulfilling of the Law*]

Law] *ſo* is it betweene the *Husband* and the *Wife*, all *their duties* being encloſed therein, all *his* to *her eſpecially*, (and of them wee now ſpeake) and there is not any dtuy, that from the *Husband* doth reſpect the *Wife*, but it is reduced hereunto. *Love* is the *Husbands word*, and includes all the *worke* hee hath to do, towards *his wife*, being the *epitome* or *abridgement* of all that hee owes unto her. Touching which *love*, if I ſhould preſſe al particulars, it were eaſie to be (almoſt) endleſſe; among others, take a taſte of theſe few, and conſider, we weld,

Rom. 13. 10.

Love is all in all, betweene *married* perſons.

Firſt, the *neceſsity* of it, how without all diſpenſation & exemption, a man *muſt*

I
Neceſſity of this Love.

love his *wife*. This is a generall and perpetuall rule, a ruled case beyond all contradiction, *there is no time or state wherein a man may not love his Wife*, (and if a *Wife* in generall, how much more the *Wife* we speake of?) in al his practices towards her, his *love* must be the *predominant*, neyther may any thing be attempted toward her, which savors not *principally* of it. No act can be *lawfull*, but what is *loving*, if it want *his love*, it wants also *the Lords allowance*; without *this affection*, it is *sinne* and *corruption*; men may pretend many things, but this *one thing* gives all their actions *approbation*. *Love* is the *life* of a *Husband*, as *food* is the *life* of

of the *body*, or *grace*, the *life* of *soule* and *body*, what is done without it, is a *dead worke*, and stinkes before the *Lord*, being abhorred of him. Therefore hee ties *the love*, and *hatred* of our *Wives*, and our *selves* together, and links them so inseparably, that there can be no untwisting of them, *loue one, loue both; hate not both, neyther is loued*; but a man hates *himself* with his *Wife* (spite of his heart) and so is guilty both of the *law of Nature*, and the *law* of *Grace* together, and sinnes against God, the *Law-giuer* of both, & so is sure of *Gods hate* to himselfe, for *his own hate* to his *Wife*. Thus is the *necessitie* of this love; but we must hasten forward. Iam. 4.12.

2. The Nature of this Love.

Secondly, consider the *nature* of this *love*, it must be the most deare, intimate, precious and entyre, that *heart* can have toward a creature; none but the love of GOD above, is *above* it, none but the love of our owne selves is *fellow* to it, all the love of others is *inferiour* to it, even of our Father and Mother who begat, and bare us, and of whose blood wee are. The *Fountaine* of *love*, will have the current runne stronger to the *Wife*, then to any, or to *all* other, yea, all they shall dry up, before this may faile. It must be the love of *one member* to another, of *all members* to the *head* of the *head*, to them againe, and (in a word)

word) the whole love of a creature to himselfe. Nay, what speake wee of *naturall* love, (which is so much, too little to shaddow this) nothing can sufficiently signifie it unto us, but the *supernaturall* love of Christ to his spirituall Spouse which is such love as no man hath, surpassing the same in *all excellent respects* whatsoever. Thus is the *nature* of this love.

Thirdly, consider the *measure* of this love, which from the *Husband* to the *Wife*, must be *immeasurable*, (as I may so say) and cannot exceed in the truth thereof. SOLOMON, (or rather GOD by him,) gives liberty to a man to *erre* in the love, for so are

3. The measure of this love.

the words [*erre thou in her love,*] as if, an error, of *exceſſe* (if it might be) were pardonable, and a man ſhould delight in his *wife*, rather *ouermuch* then any thing too *little*; in ſuch a degree of love as the world may account *error* or *dotage*, is the *Wife* to be loued of her *Husband*, rather then to be *underloued* of him; *defect* of this love is *inſufferable*, but the moſt that *can be expreſſed*, is *commanded*, though it ſhould be thought *too much*, the *Lord* will rather indure *this errour* of our *ouer-louing*, then abide that the *iuſt proportion* ſhould be wanting. The former conſideration of the *nature* of it, doth confirme this of the *meaſure*, for that which (being

ing required of us) must be *best* for *quality*, the same must also be *most* for *quantity*, evermore *the best*, and *the most*, wee can by all meanes give both to God, and to such as God requireth any thing to be given unto, must be given of us. Hence it is, that *no stint* is set on it, but it must be *more* then the love of our *Father* & *Mother*, and *as much* as the love of our selves, *lesse onely*, then the love of *God*. If any shall object, that being required to love our *wives as our selves*, it seemeth our love to them should not exceed the love of our *neighbour*, whom wee also must love *as our selves*, by Christs rule. I answer, the word [*as*] doth not evermore signifie

Mat. 22. 39. expounded.

The word [as] doth sometimes signifie *quality*, rather then *equality*.

equality of things, but sometimes their *quality* onely, not taking away the *difference*, and *degrees* of our love, but shewing the *sinceritie*, and *faithfulnesse* of the same, that as we love *our selves with love unfained*, (not *counterfeit*) so, with *such* love as this should we *love our neighbour*, with *such*, I say, but not with *so much*, as our *Wife* and *our selves*: for, both *reason* alowes us to love our *Father* above a *stranger*, and *Religion*, (though requiring love to all, yet,) puts a *difference*, and will have it *especially* shewed to *the houshold of faith*: but in love to the *Wife*, [*as*] is the same in *quality* and *quantity* also, for it must be *the same* with the

Gal. 6. 19.

love

love *to our ſelves*, and I thinke every man loves himſelfe, both as well, and *as much* as he is able, and ſo muſt he entertain his *wife* with his *moſt* and *beſt* love under Gods.

Fourthly, conſider the *manifeſtation* of this love, which muſt be *univerſall* in every thing, that thing cannot be thought of, wherein a *Huſbands* love may be lawfully with-holden, it muſt ſhine and ſhew it ſelfe in *all paſſages*, both *naturall*, *civill*, and *ſpirituall*, *in cohabitation* with her: *in honouring* of her: *in edifying of her*, by the *holieſt counſell* that he can give her; and *in winking at ſmall weakneſſes*, and *pardoning greater failings upon her ſubmiſſion*, but howſoever, *in fervent affection*, pray-

4. The manifeſtation of this love.

praying for her, under the guilt of them: each of these would require a severall exercise to insist upon, I *onely name* them now, and may *not tarry* upon the ample discovery of any one of them.

Obiect.

But here will some obiect, may not a man be angry with his *wife*, & having cause so to be, may he not *chastise her?* I answer, there may be cause given by the *Wife*, of just indignation in the *Husband*, but this *anger* must not be *opposed* to *loue*, as if *to be angry*, were *not to be louing*. *Anger* that doth abolish *loue*, is not to be in a *Husbands heart*; his bosome must harbour no such *passion*, as doth *destroy*, or *debarre true affection*. In this particular, the

Answ. Whether a man may not be angry with his *Wife*, and being so, whether he may not chastise her.

Lord

Lord himſelfe is a ſingular patterne to us, *wee anger him*, and yet *hee loves us*, (even when hee is *angry* with us,) he is both *angry* and *loving* at once, ſo muſt the *Husband* be. Iſai. 54. 8.

"Touching *chaſtiſement*, a "man may ſo farre exerciſe "it *upon his Wife*, as *upon him-* "*ſelfe*, which cannot be in "any *ſervile* manner *poſitive*, "and *penall*, but *negative* a- "lone, that is to ſay, as a "man for juſt cauſe may "with-hold from *himſelfe*, "and abridge his *body* of "ſome contentments for the "better ſubduing of the "ſame unto God, ſo may "the *Wife*, (in caſe of *groſſe* "*irregularity*) be, by the "*Husband*, debarred (at leaſt "for a ſeaſon) for her *better*

hum-

" *humbling*, of *some favours*,
" and *kindnesses*, which for-
" merly she hath more free-
" ly enjoyed, that in the
" *want* of *them* shee may see
" the *want* of her *duty*. Thus
" doth *God chasten* whom he
" loves, and *Christ*, often in
" this kinde afflicteth his
" *Spouse*. But once to thinke
" of *seruile correction* by *blows*,
" which *children* from *parents*,
" *seruants* from *Masters*, *slaues*
" from *Tyrants*, yea, which
" *beasts* do beare at the *hands*
" *of their owners*, is *base*, and
" that which the heart of a
" *Husband* should *abhorre*, and
" the nature of this love wil
" not *beare*; for *such* as *his loue*
" is, *such* must the *chastisment*
" *of his Vvife be*: But his love
" must be of a *better straine*
then

"then to *all others*, even *the best* he can ſhew to himſelfe, therefore, ſuch as his *owne chaſtiſment* may be, ſuch may *hers* be alſo *by him*, and no other. *But more of this hereafter.*

Thus wee ſee the *uſes* that concerne *Husbands* that have good *Wiues*, what they owe to the Lord *for them*, and *what to them*, in the LORD; hee that will not afford the *beſt* hee can *of honour* to God, *of affection* to her, becauſe ſhee is *Gods beſt* temporall bleſſing to him; let him, *by man*, be pronounced *iniurious* to the LORD, and *unworthy* of her; and *by the* LORD be puniſhed for robbing both; *the one* of that *glory* that is due to him, *the other* of that *duety* that be-

belongs to her. *It is a wofull thing to have a worthy Wife, and not to honour the* LORD *in her, nor to honour her in the* LORD, hee that is found guilty, ſhall find how feareſull it is.

VVhat they muſtdoe that have bad *VVives.*

Now for thoſe *Husbands* as have *Wives*, but not ſuch as wee ſpeake of, it is meete we miniſter a few comfortable words in due ſeaſon unto them, for (I dare ſay) *they re weary*: In commiſeration therefore of their preſent eſtate, and in deſire of their better being, wee will adde a worthy *counſell*, which if they will follow, wee will annexe a word of comfort, which will follow them.

Their counſel two-fold.

The *counſell* we give them conſiſts in two particulars,

to

to wit, *partly* in matter of *practice*, and *partly* in matter of *prayer*.

First, for *practice*, their speciall care must be to goe before them (even before *bad wives*) in all *good* carriage, in the duties the LORD requireth towards them:- Nay, *the worse the Wife* is, *the better* must he endeavour to be: *impiety* must be out-faced with *sincerity*, *evill must be overcome with good*, and the *Husbands good* must eate out the *Wives evill*, it is the *true glory of Religion* to *exceede* there, where *irreligion* is *predominant*, and for him to parallell her *extreme evill*, with his *extraordinarie good*, *is wonderfull honour to* GOD, *shall be* assured *consolation to him*, *may be* timely,

1 For *practice*.

Rom. 12. 21.

The worse the *Wife* is, the better must the *Husband* be.

ly, *conversion to her*. The want of being ruled by this *counsell*, hath made many a *mans* and *womans* state more *perplexed* and *intolerable*, then otherwise it might have proved. Where, and when is most need of his *greatest faithfulnesse*, then when, & where, shee *most grossely faileth*. "Where most *venome* and "*poyson* is, there is most *ne-*"*cessity*, and *use* of *soveraigne* "*preservatives*, such is *grace* "against *sinne*, *conscience* a-"gainst *corruption*, the *Hus-*"*bands wisedome* against the "*Wives weaknesse*, his *discre-*"*tion* against her *rebellion*. "That which hath made many a *Husbands* misery *out of measure miserable*, is the want of this one thing; had

this

this lesson bin well *learned*, his *load* had bin more then halfe *lightned*, if not wholly eased, whereas the addition of his evill to hers, hath made the burthen simply insupportable. But I will not now dwel upon this particular, because I purpose (*if the* LORD *please, and I live*) a more ample Treatise touching this point, wherein I shall endeavor to teach the *Husband*, or *Wife* that is *gracious* and *beleeving*, the way and means how to save the *Wife* or *Husband godlesse* and *unbeleeving*, out of those words of the holy Ghost, 2 *Cor.* 7. 16. [*for what know'st thou, O woman, whether thou shalt save thy husband, and what know'st thou, ô man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?*]

In

In the meane time, let not the *Husband* in any caſe reſolve to conquer his *VVives* wickedneſſe with *his owne*, for *his* iniquity added to *hers*, will canker, and eate further in, till all be incurable.

2 For Prayer.

Secondly, as wee counſell a *Husband* to this *practice*, which he may, and muſt do; ſo wee further adviſe him, (beſides this) to *pray* for that which he cannot doe. Hee muſt be an earneſt ſuitor to GOD, for ſuch a *VVife*, and beſtirre himſelfe in prayr, to him who hath *power* to make her, both *holy* to himſelfe, and *happy* to her *Husband*; we are not ſo *happy* in *any bleſſings*, as thoſe wee winne by *petition*, and in this, a man may be heartned, and

Wee are not ſo happy in any bleſſings, as in thoſe we winne by *prayer*.

Pſalm. 115. 3. Pſalm. 136. 4.

have

have encouragement to go to God, who *is able in every thing to doe whatsoever hee will*, and whose onely *power* and *honour* it is to do wonderful things. Isai. 55. 13.

He onely can make *a firre-tree of a thorne, a mirre tree of a brier.* Hosea 2. 23. 2 Corin. 4. 6.

He onely can make *her to obtaine mercie, which had obtained no mercy.*

Hee onely *can bring light out of darknesse.*

He onely *can raise children to* Abraham *of stones.*

Be not *faithlesse*, but *faithfull*, be not *faint*, but *fervent* in seeking the face of the Lord for this thing, *by unceſſant ſupplication.* He that *made Adam* such a creature, when there was *none*, and *built* him such a blessing of his *bone*, can

can doe thee good in thy evill. Can the *conversion of thy wife*, be difficult to him, to whom the *creation of his* was so easie? did he freely of his owne accord (without all intreaty) build her *intirely*, who had neither *matter*, *forme*, *nature* nor *grace*, before being; and doth thou doubt that hee wil deny thee (being sincerely sought) the *ioynting*, *framing*, *ordering*, and *beautifying* of thine, which is built already. *His* was to *make*, *thine* is onely to *mend*; make forward to him who of his *owne pleasure*, did the one for him, *at thy prayer* (for his Sonnes sake) he will not delay to do the other for thee, (in his time;) or if hee doth not, hee will fitt thee to beare thine

thine affliction, and that is all one to be freed from it. It differs not much to have *no burthen*, and to *have ſtrength to beare the burden that we have*. Many a man that hath had a *croſſe* in ſteede of a *crowne*, hath yet had a *crowne* of his *croſſe*. *This hath been the Lords doing, and it hath beene wonderfull in our eyes*; and one of theſe *two wonders* hath hee ever wrought, *eyther* made the *bad wife good*, according to the gracious *Husbands* heart, *or* made his *good heart* able, and meete to undergoe the *worſt* of her *evill*. And if the HVSBAND thus heavily *wived*, ſhall take theſe councells and ſhape his courſe according to them, he ſhall be Matth. 21. 42.

be ſure of more *comfort* from *God*, then hee can have *calamity* by her. Theſe are the *meanes*, that may make her good (if not *in* her ſelfe yet) *to* him, and the *Lord glorious*, in them both, according to the good pleaſure of his ſacred will.

CHAP. V.

The Vſe of the former doctrine, eſpecially concerning the wives themſelves.

Vſe 3. To Wives.

THus, having ended what wee have to ſay to *Husbands* from this inſtruction, we muſt now begin with *you wiues*, and give you to underſtand what *good duties*, hee lookes for at your hands, that made

made you ſuch *good creatures*. Our third *uſe* therefore hath reſpect to you alone.

We ſhall not need (I think) to preſſe upon you the perſwaſion of our *doctrine*, I make no queſtion, but that you believe all which we have ſaid, touching *your excellency*, and that moſt readily you yeeld all aſſent unto the ſame; I *warrant*, you think it as true *as the Goſpell*, and that *a truer word* was never ſpoken; well, ſeing we have no need *to prove* it at all to you, our endeavour ſhall be the more fully to *apply* that home, whereof your hearts are ſo throughly perſwaded.

Wee are moſt willing you ſhould beleeve this truth, and every jot and tittle of it, (*as it is Gods revealed will*) but we

would not have you boaſt of it, as if it were *really* true in *every Wife*, that (*hiſtorically*) can conſent, that it is a truth *in it ſelfe*. It muſt not *puffe* up them, of whome it is meant, (neyther indeede will it) much leſſe thoſe, whoſe want of good, doth *not* make it good upon their perſons. It is a moſt true *propoſition*, as *God underſtandeth it*, of *gracious Wives*, but a thouſand to one, but it is *falſe* of all thoſe that *underſtand it of themſelves* : no point of divinity muſt produce *pride* in any heart; that which is *holy* and *true*, will breed no hawtineſſe in an *honeſt* and *well informed minde*, but them make *ioyfully humble*, that deſerve it, and thoſe *iuſtly aſhamed*, that doe not. You muſt then *winne it* and *weare it*, be *worthy*

thy of it, and *enioy* it: if you be [*women of ſtrength,*] *gracious* and *holy VVomen*, whoſe hearts endeavour the honour of God *principally*, and your *Husbands happineſſe* (in this place) *faithfully*, you are the *Crownes* wee ſpeake of. Shew us your *graces*, you ſhall have your *glory*, wee ſhall joy to acknowledge your *worthineſſe*, when your *workes* doe challenge it, for *wee* gaine as much *comfort* as *you* gaine *credit* by it, it being our *happineſſe* in you, by which *your honour* comes unto you. But let none of you be *proud* of the *praiſe* GOD giveth you, hee revealed it to give you *encouragement*, not to make you *conceited*. *Humilitie* hath beene the *glory* of the moſt *holy* WOMEN, the *beſt* of whome have ever thought

VVomen muſt not be proud of the praiſe which God giveth them.

most *basely* of themselves. So was *Sarah*, *Rebeccah*, *Ruth*, *Hester*, *Abigail*, with many more, (*whose daughters yee are in well doing.*) These were *Crownes*, but they would not *crack* of it, howbeit, the Lord hath left them (for *rare women*) upon the *record*, which cannot be *razed*, *heaven and earth shall passe away*, *before the evidence of their honour shall perish*. The most *humble* Woman hath ever bin most *honourable*: shee is the most *glorious in Gods eye*, that can be *meane in her owne*. *Mary*, the mother of Christ, the *mirror*, and *most blessed among Women*, is witnessed to be both *lowly* and *blessed*.

1 Peter 3.6.

Math. 5.18.

Luke 1.28.

A Caveat to VVomen.

Take heed of treading a *tiptoe*, because of this *truth*, to *goe farre* on that fashion, is the next way *to fall*; the onely way

way *to go without this glory*, is to *arrogate it*, it pertaineth leaſt to thoſe that take it, little is their *right* to it, (if any at all) that *over-eagerly* reach after it: no, no, a good Woman *will believe ſhee ſhould be a crowne*, not *bragge that ſhee is ſo*, though ſhee be ſo.

Thoſe that are, let them rejoyce, but not in *themſelves*, or their *ſexe* eyther, it comes not by kind that any attaines this honour, *it is Grace*, not *Nature* that gives it. The firſt woman that ever *was good*, *fell naught*, and became his *curſe*, unto whom ſhee was created a *crowne*. Happy are *wee men*, it "was not long of her *Husband* "that ſhee proued *naught*, but "that *ſhe* drew her evill *immediatly* from the *divell*, and *her* "*Husband* from *her*, which

Women are not to reioice in themſelves.

The reason why a *bad woman* surpasseth a *bad man*.

"may be (I thinke) a good
"reason, why *a bad Woman* so
"farre surpasseth *a bad Man*,
"*in divelliſh condition*. Had *A-*
"*dam* drawne his Wife into
"miſchiefe, wee ſhould dai-
"ly have had it *in our diſh*, our
"*impious Dames*, would make
"us heare of it, *to our teeth*,
"wee had beene ſure of your
"deadlyeſt *execration*, if
"through us, you had beene
"brought under corruption.
"But you reape better mea-
"ſure at our hands, though
"*you* made us *wretched*, *we* up-
"braid you not, nor are the
"more *bitter* becauſe of this,
"the *divell* hath all our *enmity*
"and *indignation*, *you*, our *pitty*
"and *comiſeration*, though you
"wounded *your ſelves* and *us*,
"ſo incurably at one blow.

But (it may be) you wil bid

us

Women cavills against men confuted.

us thanke our selves, & say, we have our mends in our owne hands, because *Adam* (having absolute free will) might have chose whether he would have yeelded to his Wife or no, and so it was his owne fault that he fel, he might have *stood*, and beene still *good*, if hee would. True: But (I pray you) was not *Hevah* as free as *Adam*? might not shee have chosen (*first*) whether she would have fallen into the pit or no? and seeing shee did, must shee needes pull in her *Husband* too? might shee not have beene sinfull alone? must shee bee his *Tempter*, seeing that the *Divell* was *hers*, and carry him with her selfe, under their *MAKERS* malediction? who can tell that *ADAM* would

would have done thus? it is likely the *divell* doubted the ſucceſſe, ſeeing hee ſet not upon *him*, it may be thought, *hee* miſtruſted the *man* would not yeeld, ſeeing he made choyce of the *woman* to enſnare *him*. But, admit *he* had beene tempted and prevailed upon in *his owne perſon*; may any body affirme hee would have (done as ſhe did) *undone her* with *himſelfe*, and being made wofull, *inſtantly*, to become *Satans agent*, to make his *wife ſo* too.

But (in favour of your ſelves) it will be replied, that though her fault were *undeniable*, yet, it is the more *excuſable*, becauſe ſhe was the *weaker creature*, and had ſo *ſtrong*, and *ſubtile a tempter*, wheras *Adam* being more abſolute, was over-

come

come by her, who was more fraile, and inferiour. True; *ſhee* was miſchieved by the *divell*, *hee* by *her*, but that (before her fall) ſhee was *weaker in grace*, then *Adam* (they being both in the perfect excellency of Gods Image) is more then I can make good. Howbeit, admit (for the time) ſhe were the *weaker*, yet, *ſhee* yeelded to a *divel*, to a *Serpent*, *he*, to a *woman*, a *friend*, his owne deare *wife*; her ſeducer was infinitely more to be ſuſpected, ſhee could not but know that there was no ſuch Image, nor voyce of God, in a *beaſt*, ſhee might have taken a thouſand occaſions of moſt *juſt iealouſie*, againſt him that *thus* appeared, and e'r ſhe had yeelded, have gone to her *huſband* (if ſhee knew him to be

more absolute then her selfe) for counsell, and direction, what *to doe*, or *decline*, whether the motion were fitter to be *heard*, or, to be *abhorred*, seeing it beganne with the *grosse accusation* of their most *glorious Creator*. But *he* is set upon by *her* that was made of himselfe, and for his greater good, (which shee pretended in this particular) *she was* most precious to his affection, and beloved of himselfe; *she was* a creature reasonable, both of Gods *making* and *gracing*, and his best blessing: If she were (in any mans opinion) the weaker and more impotent creature, doubtlesse in the *divells* apprehension, shee was like to prove a *stronger* and more prevailing *tempter* to the man then himselfe, seeing he durst

durſt not aſſault him by any other inſtrument; but *picke* out her, as the moſt *probable* (if any might be *poſſible*) to be pernicious to him. Now who ſo is overcome by an *open adverſary* whom hee may repell if hee will, is juſtly reproached, but hee that is wounded in *the houſe of his friends*, by thoſe hee *loveth beſt*, and *miſtruſteth leaſt*, carries every mans commiſeration, where he comes.

So that now you ſee there is no advantage by this kind of contending, the *worſt end* will be ever *yours*, though ours be *too bad*; ſurely, hee that hath made you our *greateſt comforts*, (even our *Crownes*) doth thereby inſinuate you were, once *the heavieſt croſſes* wee had: be *glad*

(*not*

(*not proud*) in him who hath made you good againe; and though you were found so good as hee intendeth, yet evermore beware of *swelling*, in supposing your selves such treasures to us, as if now *wee* were happy *by you* onely, *you onely in your selves*, and not *by us*.

A memorandum.

This one word *therefore*, I would have with you, e'r you goe, that it might be a perpetuall *memorandum* for the abandoning of all *selfe-conceit*, that if a *good Wife* may be such a peereleſſe favour to a *Husband*, a *good Husband* cannot be *a meaner*, (but a much more *eminent*) *mercy* to a *Wife*. It were senſleſſe once to dreame that *your* happineſſe by us, ſhould be inferiour to *ours* by you, it is very poſſible wee may

How much better a good Husband is, then a good Wife.

may *exceed*, and be *beyond* you herein, but it cannot be, wee ſhould come *ſhort*, or lie *behind*. I am ſure it is better having a *healthfull head*, then a *ſound ſide*, though both be ſingular bleſſings. Is not *a good King* a bleſſing incomparably *beyond the beſt Crowne?* If a *piece of a man* (*a rib*) could make you ſo *rare a favor to us*, *our whole man* muſt needs *be a much more rich mercy to you*. All this, (and much more which I could adde) is *on our ſide*, and ſhewes you to be more happy *in us*, then it is poſſible *for us* to be in you: *you* are the beſt temporall bleſſings *wee have*, *wee* the beſt *you* can *have*. Let us both be glad in him that hath (*mutually*) made us ſo, and glorifie that God, *from whom* wee had our firſt *originall good*, *in* cre-

creation, *by whom* wee have our ſecond *ſpirituall good*, *in regeneration*, and *with whom* we ſhall have our laſt, and beſt *eternall good in glorification*.

Say not, in your ſelves, (ſome have idlely done it, therefore I digreſſe into it) that if you had not beene made of man, you had beene *more happy*, and we *not unhappy* by you. Is it not groſſe preſumption now to *ſurmiſe conditionally* of things, otherwiſe then GOD hath ſet them *abſolutely* from everlaſting? Is is not egregious folly, to imagine any occaſion of your miſcarriage to lie, in the *unattainted materialls*, you had from us, (they being perfect while they remained ours, and polluted after they became yours?) was not all *your evill*

The evill of the *woman* was not from *man*, but from the *divell*.

of

of the *divell* onely? if our ſubſtance were any incitation to him to attempt you, ſure hee would have beene moſt *bold*, where it did moſt *abound*, and then wee ſhould have had the firſt *on-ſet*. And you that think your ſelves the worſe, becauſe you were made of *man*, I wonder whereof you could have been made to have bin either *better*, or, *ſo good*. *Angelicall* ſubſtance became *Satanicall*; the ſubſtance of *beaſts* was liable (you ſee) to *diabolicall ſervice*, and *paſſion*, (witneſſe the *Serpent* that deceived you) beſides, they were *baſer* then *man* too. Eyther then, you muſt not be *creatures*, or you cannot tell when you are *well*. If wee vvould be quarrelſome, and make the vvorſt of every thing, how much

much more iuſtly might *wee complaine* againſt *you*, that thus *cauleſſely cavill* againſt us? that whereas you received *incorrupted* matter from us, you brought nothing but *miſery* and *corruption* to us. O, but you have made vs a *full mends* for all, if wee will remember our ſelves. It is true (ſay you) *corruption* came to *man by a woman*, and *as true*, that Chriſt (*who cured all*) came of another *woman*. So that, *the good* you have brought us, is farre above *the evill*; you glory that it was given to *no man* to be his *Father*, yet a *woman* might be his *Mother*. To *beare* the ſecond *Adam*, is *more good*, then it *was evill*, to *betray* the firſt.

The *womans* plea for her *ſexe*, becauſe of it came our Saviour.

Anſwered. *This is your plea.* But thus to ſpeake, is at once to be *a babler*, *a buſie-bodie* and *a boaſter*, and

and all three, are the badges of fooliſh *woman*; but our anſwer ſhall be briefe, becauſe wee are out of our way. "Chriſt had a *Woman* to his "Mother, that hee might *be* "*borne* to beare our infirmity, "and (having a paſſible bo-"dy) he might become *as mi-*"*ſerable*, as the *firſt woman* "made the *firſt man*. Chriſt "himſelf doth not ſo magni- Luk. 11. 27, 28
"fie *her that bare him* (only in "that regard) but affirmes it "to be a farre greater prero-"gative, to be a *myſticall mem-*"*ber of him*, then *a naturall* "*Mother to him*. *Be it*, he had "a *woman* to his Mother, no "*man* to his Father; doth this "either *ſanctifie*, or *magnifie* "*your ſexe?* If ſo, then doth ours ſurmount yours, ſeeing it was given to our *ſexe*, that hee

ſhould

ſhould be borne *a Man*, not *a Woman*. But we will not wade futher in theſe fruitleſſe contentions, neyther would I have ſpoken a word this way, but to ſtop their mouthes, of *ignorance* and *inſolencie*, who thinke all the *ſunne ſhine* to be on their ſide the ſtreete, and [*iudging onely according to the outward appearance, not with a righteous iudgement*] doe neyther diſcerne *the things of God*, nor *their owne ſtate aright*: but goe on *giddily* in theſe (and many the like) *fanatical* apprehenſions, the true diſcovery whereof is (every way) their owne diſadvantage.

John 7.24.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The Vses of the former point, concerning unmarried persons.

AND so now having said enough (for the present) to *married persons*, wee come next to *touch* such as are yet to *marry*, and to *teach* them some thing from this truth, that a gracious Wife is such a good blessing: both *young men* and *maides*, must make somewhat hereof, it is very materiall, and much concernes them both, to conceive rightly of it, in regard of themselves. Our next Vse therefore, shall be advice to them, and eyther of them.

Vse 4. To *unmaryed Persons.*

First,

1 To yong men who would have *wives*, before they can use or keepe them.

First, young men (being perswaded that gracious Wives are such blessings) must be instant with God by prayer, to prepare and fit them for the comfortable receiving of so rich a favour; it is (almost) *as miserable* every way (and some way *more*) to be *without* any blessing, as to have it, being *not fit* for it; we have nothing *in mercy*, from the Lord, but what hee doth *make us meete to receive and enioy*, that *good thing* that findes us not fitted for it, cannot be *good to us*, be it ever so excellent in ir selfe.

It is the strange *blindnes* and *dotage* of the world, as soone as any thing is applauded, to be presenly eager of it, and hungry after it: a *childish humour* and *disposition* doth possesse them, what they conceit well of,

of, they will have, not queſtioning, or caring whether it be *fit for them*, or *they for it*. But wiſedome and judgement would firſt worke a mans will and deſire to be *apt to have it, able to uſe it*, and then *to poſſeſſe* it. A *wiſe Father*, will detaine from his child, what he doth *through weakneſſe* affect, knowing that though it *be good*, yet can it not *be good to him*, till he be wiſer. God *onely wiſe*, our *beſt Father* doth in like manner with us, keepes thoſe mercies *from us*, wee are not in caſe to receive *from him*. How happy were it wee could ceaſe *whyning* and *repining* againſt *his goodneſſe*, and fall to *complayning* of *our ſelves*, in whom is the *onely cauſe* of all the comforts we want; were we capable of them, heaven could not

hold

hold them from us. Hee that would have a *Matrimoniall Crowne*, must first learne to be a *Matrimoniall King*.

If any be as unadvisedly earnest after this, as the mother of *Iames* and *Iohn* was, after that she dreamed of, their qualification shall be called in question before they shall attaine it, as hers was.

Mat.20.20.21

Oh, that *unwise* man did know that his happinesse did not totally consist in the *having* of any earthly favour, (no not of *this best blessing*) and that thereupon wee would frame our first importunity to the Lord, *to fit us* for his favours, and then *to furnish* us with them, knowing that they are thrown in great justice into their bosomes, who know not how to use them, as *Abigail*

gail was to *Nabal*, who is the more notoriously *base*, by her *excellency*.

It is very possible, that *many a man* may be more miserable (before GOD) having a *good Wife*, then some other *before the world* with *a bad*; hee that hath the *happier wife*, may have the *heavier account* to make.

When the LORD *meanes* a man any mercy, he makes him *meete* for it, and the mercy *meete* for him, and gives us hearts to begge the *former*, before the *latter*. Let this *one thing* be well minded of us, for it is a matter that doth much concerne us. *To be willing* to have any thing that is good, is but *naturall*, but *to be wise*, in this particular, is a point of *grace*.

When the Lord meanes a man a mercy, hee makes him meet for it.

The

The LORD uſed both his *wiſdome*, and *love* to give *Adam* a *wife*, to wit, ſuch a one as might be *meete* for him, what bleſſing had ſhee (*elſe*) beene? and if this were Gods unſpeakable *goodneſſe* to him, ſhal it not be *good* for us to follow the Lord fervently, beſeeching him to beſtow that *good* upon us, which hee ſo freely, and graciouſly gave to the firſt man? The *greater* or *better* any excellent thing is, the *worſe*, and *more woefull* is the ſame to ſuch as have it, and have not wiſedome to uſe it. It would ill become every *Idiot*, or *baſe companion* to be crowned, becauſe they have neither *princely parts*, nor *princely hearts*, and know nothing appertaining to ſuch honour. In like manner the *love of God* is

neglected,

neglected, God himselfe *dishonored*, his *best blessings abused*, our *impiety* (in all this) *immeasurably multiplyed*, and all, through this childish eagernesse to *enioy*, and inability to *imploy*, the kindnesses hee doth cast upon us.

Secondly, Virgins or Maids. 2
who are not yet (but may be in due time) marryed, must betake themselves to GOD too, that they may be such singular benefits unto those to whom the Lord (in due time) shall assigne them. The time was, when (*once*) it was *naturall* to your sexe to be so *excellent*, but she that *first* enioyed it, *destroyed* it, altering the *property*, and losing the *prerogative* belonging to you all; you must (therefore) goe to that GOD who made her *so good*, to make

The use of it to Virgins.

you *anew*, because now you are *so bad*.

And to set the sharper edge upon your supplications, doe but thinke what a shame it is for a Wife, *not to be* exceeding good, seeing shee *may be* so. No *gracious* Woman is *lesse*, (in Gods account,) and if any would be *lesse* then *gracious*, it is pitty they live. Vnworthy are they to weare a good Womans *appellation*, who care not to attaine her *qualification*. Betake you selves then to *God*, and seek *him unceassantly*, who is most able (and most willing) to doe you good. Hee can mould you out of HEVAHS, into SARAHS, and in steade of *naturall deformity by sin*, give you *celestiall excellency* from himselfe, making you both, *matrimonial mercies* to men, and

Vnworthy is shee of wearing a good womans appellation, that cares not for her qualification.

mysti-

myſticall members of his Sonne.

Having thus farre, (in the *former uſes*) ſpoken *ſomething* to all ſorts of perſons, eyther married, or in poſſibility of marriage: wee might now in the *laſt place*, ſet upon the *oppoſites* of this excellent ordinance of God. I meane, *eſpecially*, thoſe who cannot abide, or brooke, that it ſhould (*in opinion*) be preferred before *ſingle life*, in *any mans iudgement*, or, (*in practice*) be at all, permitted *to ſome men*, namely, to the *Miniſters* of the Goſpell. *No man* may thinke it equally excellent with *Virginity*, *no Miniſter*, may meddle with it in the excellency that it hath, but ſhun & abſtaine from it, as from ſome *foule and feareful ſin*. The *enemy & adverſary that hath done both theſe, is the impius papiſt*:

Vſe 5. Againſt the enemies of Marriage.

Single life, or celibate.

Eccl. 7. 5.

And (in truth) the maintainance of ſuch propoſitions may well beſeeme the *ymps* of that *ſpirituall Bawd*, whom the juſt Lord doth brand to be [*the mother of whoredome*] even of *Naturall*, as well as of *myſticall filthineſſe*, whoſe Church is little elſe, then *a ſtewes ſpirituall*, and (by the Lawes thereof) alloweth, *innumerable that are carnall* in every corner of the uſurped territories of her Antichriſtian juriſdiction.

It were moſt eaſie to muſter up a million of evidences againſt this *evident hereſie* and *impiety* of theirs, which being by the Apoſtles verdict a [*doctrine of divells*] hath none to abet it but *his diſciples*, who are of *diabolicall ſpirit, iudgement*, and *affection*.

2 Tim. 4. 1, 3.

But what needeth there any more

more to confute, yea, confound them heerein, then this *apparant truth* that wee have taught? For if a gracious *Wife be* such a blessing as is declared, and *was* so from the beginning, to *Adam* in *innocency*, even *the consummation* and *perfection* of his present welfare, (as before is made manifest) what man, or sonne of man [*except the man of sinne, and sonne of perdition*] can with any colour of truth, account her *an evill, not to be touched?* and esteeme any sonne of *Adam more holy*, or *more happy*, without her, then they are to whom shee is given? 2 Thes. 2. 3.

Tell vs, as the truth is, were not all men (*Ministers* as well as others) in the loynes of *Adam?* at what time the Lord spake that *word* [*it is not good* Gen. 3. 18.

for man to be alone] and was not this ſpoken to *Adam*, and (*in Adam*) to al that were to come of him, even then, when hee, (and all mankind) were without any ſuch neceſſity of a Wife, as ariſeth out of the leaſt *naturall annoyance*, in regard of *concupiſcence*, or any other *defect*, *frailty*, or *infirmity* whatſoever.

And is that become *no bleſſing* to ſome men, *now*? which was *ſuch happineſſe*, when *all men* were at their *beſt*? Are thoſe two *univerſall* and *glorious* ends which the Lord *ſo directly* intended (in the inſtitution of matrimony) become *vaine* and *voyd* in any, to wit, the *worlds multiplication*, and the *Churches propagation*. And is the *third*, (which came in *ſo accidentally* by our corruption) to wit,

to

to become a *remedy* and *cure* of our impure and uncleane desires (which the living God, in much mercy, hath made it to be) *a meer nullity*, to so *many as* (throughout the world) *entertaine the Miniſtry*. No, it is moſt undeniable, that all and every of *theſe three* doe, (and will to the worlds end) remaine in their *full power, force, and vertue*, without any ſuch *ample* and *unwarranted* exemption, as they make of *all Miniſters*. The more extremely ſinfull, and execrably ſacrilegious, is this their *falſe opinion*, and *enforced practice*, which doth (at once) ſtand guilty of a *threefold theft*, for it robs Heaven of *Saints*, earth of *men*; *men of a ſanctified, and powerfull meanes, to prevent ſin*.

Popiſh denyall of marriage ſtands guilty of a 3. fold theft.

This treble *fellony*, (with the *villany* ensuing upon it) provokes divine vēgeance, which every transgressour, *in opinion, and practice*, shal assuredly feel from that God, whose truth they have herein resisted.

Encrease and multiply] was the common benediction, as, *of all creatures*, so, *of all mankind*, without *any limitation*; who shall enclose and appropriate *to some*, what the Lord, *at first, laid open*, (and hath for ever *left open*) *to all*? Who shall *debarre* us of that which the Lord *alloweth*? and *binde* where hee *looseth*? *Ministers* by the impurity of nature, are as corrupt as others, and stand under the same *necessities naturall*, that all men doe; shall they be made incapable *of the remedy*, who are as incident to the *malady*

as

as any? Againe, *Miniſters* (though *originally*, in equall corruption with all mankind) yet, by the more *ſpeciall power* of *ſaving grace* abounding in them above others, (their whole life, being nothing but a *converſation with God*) are in *greater poſsibility*, to furniſh the Church, and fill *heaven*, with *a holy ſeed*, then every other, by how much they are, (or ought to be) both the, *beſt huſbands*, and the *beſt Parents*, being put apart, to teach all perſons in both particulars. Who can *dreame* that the wiſdome of God ſhould reſtraine ſuch, of *matrimony*, who are *the likelieſt men* to advantage, both *heaven* and *earth* by it. I willingly ſpare, to tell you, with what *infinite diſhonour* to the Lord, with what *inſufferable abuſe*,

abuſe, yea, *blaſphemy* of his ſacred Word, with what *unſpeakable evills*, and *villanies unnameable*, *adulterous*, *inceſtuous*, *Sodomiticall*, this their *Diabolicall* aſſertion hath beene ſupported. I know not, what impure practice is ſo *hideouſly ſhamefull*; or *helliſhly ſinfull*, but it hath beene acted by this occaſion. The *dead frogges in Ægypt* did not ſtinke like theſe *devoted Catholikes*, who being *chaſte in opinion*, are ſo *foule in converſation*, that hee that compareth their *opinions* publiſhed in their *Treatiſes*, with their *practices*, detected in their *Hiſtories*, ſhal, at once, diſcover, *moſt hateſull hypocriſie*, and *much horrible diſhonesty*. All the records under heaven, can hardly match the monſtrous filthineſſe, and egregi-

ous

ous enormities of thoſe *Roman virgins* unto whom a *Wife* (forſooth) is *execrable* and *vnholy*, but *all vncleanneſſe*, forbidden in the ſeventh Commandement, *ordinary*. But it is not meete I ſhould diſcend into *inſtances*, this place is *too holy*, thoſe particulars are *too baſe* and *filthy*, to be mentioned *here* or in any *modeſt preſence*. Beſides, it is done abundantly by others, both among *themſelves*, and us. *Laſtly*, their *Champion Bellarmine* confeſſes, hee hath *no Scripture* to avouch it; (and we can avouch *much* againſt it,) why ſhould we contend? conſidering alſo, that this is a *wedding day*, & ſo much the more unfit *to fight in*; wee come hither to *aduiſe our frends* rather then to *oppoſe our aduerſaries*, & that wee may have the

more

more time to *cõſel you*, we wil (for this time) ceaſe our *quarrell with them*. And thus much for the firſt *generall inſtruction*, ariſing out of the words conſidered *ioyntly*, and *together*.

CHAP. VII.

The Mature Deliberation, and good circumſpection about our Matrimoniall affaires.

WE are now to proceed and put on to a more *particular inquiry* into them, eſpecially into this word [CROWNE] wherunto (you ſee) a good Wife is here compared, and reſembled. And ſurely, it being for ſome ſingular and notable *ſimilitude*, that

that her qualification hath to a *Crowne*, that (among all other things) the wiſedome of God thinks it meet to compare her *thereunto*, it ſhall be profitable for us to enquire after *the ſaid ſemblance*, ſo farre as wee may finde the *currant correſpondence* and *congruity* that the one carrieth to the other. I ſay, the *currant correſpondence*, becauſe we meane not to intermeddle with any ungrounded *Allegories*, or *parallells*; which while ſome have *affected*, and *mynted* in their owne braine, (*aboue that which is written*) *froth* and *vanity* hath beene broached in ſteede of *ſacred divinity*; *men* have been more *humoured*, then *God* hath beene *honoured*: *Themſelves* have gotten a little *idle applauſe*, and *oſtentation*, but their *hearers*, and *readers*, no

1 Cor. 4. 6.

heauen-

heavenly edification, by such unsavory assimulations as they have invented, and divulged.

But that ours may be *sound* and *currant*, we will take onely such as the Scripture doth *warrant*, speaking no more in *Allegorie*, *heere*, then is *plainly* spoken (by the spirit of God) *else-where*.

To begin then, he that calls a *Wife* a *Crowne*, doth evidently signifie, that much lies upon that man to doe, that would finde her so to himselfe, and be happily *crowned in this kinde*. The particulars to be undertaken, are these two, that follow.

Two things.

The first,

First, very mature, and exceeding serious deliberation about this matrimoniall businesse, *in generall*.

Second-

Secondly, good circumſpection and inſight into our proceeding (and into the party with whom wee intend to proceed,) in the *particular propoſitions* which may appeare, betweene *her* and *this Crowne* which doth repreſent her. And theſe two (well obſerved) will make us truely *wiſe*, and *happy*, in our enterpriſe, and the progreſſe of the ſame. The ſecond.

Touching the *firſt* of theſe, the *Holy Ghoſt* (who tells us, that ſuch a Wife is a *Crowne*) doth, in thus ſpeaking, aſſure us, that in marriage, *wee* muſt mannage our buſineſſe, as *Monarchs* doe the *affaires of their crownes*, which being of *mighty* and moſt *important conſequence*, require the *ripeſt heads*, & men of *deepeſt underſtanding*, to order them by their *beſt advice*, and Marriage doth require much deliberation.

and *counsell*. When questions and passages of this kinde are on foote, all the wisdome and policy of a state is taken up, and imploy'd, to consult *about*, and to conclude *upon*, the particulars proposed; all solicitation and intelligence that may be had, is *sought out*, every thing *thorowly sifted*, nothing left *unscanned* or *undebated* to the utmost, which may conduce to the setling of the *Crowne* in peace, upon the head of him that is *the heyre apparant* thereunto.

Now, as *reason* and *policy* in the *Crowne Monarchicall*, so *religion* and *pietie* will be our guide in this *Crowne matrimoniall*; the condition and state whereof is not so *light* or *trivi-all*, that a little advice, or consultation will serve the turne,

to diſpoſe the ſame aright.

A *Crowne*, argues as well *care*, and *circumpection*, to be had *about it*, as, *honour* and *promotion* to be obtained *by it*: matters matrimoniall, muſt have the *moſt* and *beſt counſell* that may be had, and are, in no wiſe to be undertaken with *ſlight* and *ſudden*, but with *ſerious*, *ſeaſonable*, and *well ſetled reſolution*.

As a *Crowne* argues care to be had about it, ſo a *ſtate Matrimoniall*,

The Lord himſelfe, herein, is *our preſident*, and doth goe before us in *this practice*: his wiſdome (wee know) is ſo infinite, as it needed not any time, to debate any thing, that hee would doe; hee could, in one moment of time, have *diſpatch'd the whole worlds creation*; and in the ſame moment, have alſo ſetled the *perpetuall order*, of heaven and earth, and

all

all the hoſt of them for ever; howbeit, he will ſeeme to us, to deliberate, and (as it were) to call a counſell concerning man, and that *not onely once*; about his *making* [*Let us make man*] *but againe*, concerning the *matching* of him [*alſo the Lord God ſaid, &c.*] We finde no ſuch adoe touching any other creature; no, but a *word* and an *end* [*let this, or that be, and lo, it was ſo.*] Now this is an *obſervable difference*, (my deare brethren) and it ſhall be good for us to diſcerne the reaſon of it; which no man may imagine (in the leaſt) to be *any greater difficulty with God*, becauſe all things are alike eaſie to him, who ſaith [*is any thing hard to me?*] the reaſon was (rather) this, that the *Lord* (among other ends hee might

Gen 2.26.

Gen.2.13.

Ier 32.27.

in-

intend) would *lead us* into this course, by *going before us*, himselfe, in the same; his *voluntary deliberation* (who had no neede to do so) was to shew us, what wee ought *necessarily to doe*, the *businesse* of marriage being *so great*, and *our ability* so *little*, to dispose the same.

And as God himselfe hath *begun to us*, so have his children *followed his example*, and framed their practice, in a wise, and holy imitation of the same.

Abraham was to match his sonne and heyre, to bestow *Isaac* in marriage; when hee goes about it, he calls his wisest and 'most *trusty servant*, whom he most solemnly *chargeth*, yea, *coniureth* with a mighty oath, touching his *fidelity and care*, in this *important* mat-

Gen. 24.

Examples of care had in this kinde.

matter; having ſo done, hee *breakes his mind* to him at large in the particular, and (with many deliberate words) gives him his *commiſsion*, and ſends him away about it. The *good ſervant*, is not behinde *his gracious Maſter*, in the execution of his charge committed, and entruſted on his care, but having received it *from him*, carries it immediately *to God* in *prayer*, and wee finde him moſt inſtant with the Lord, to proſper his proceedings therein, deſiring all good guidance from Heaven, how hee might demeane himſelfe (upon all occaſions) that might occurre in this paſſage. And he being thus regardfull, and conſiderate in this thing, how did the LORD ſucceede, and bleſſe *the Maſter* in *the ſervant*, *the ſervant*

The ſucceſſe of their care.

ſervant in *the buſineſſe*, every way *admirable*, both *without doores* and *within*; *in his* ſafe conduct to the right place, *in* preſenting (there) the right party, about whom hee came, ſhee being *the firſt mayde* hee meetes withall, and ſhewing him ſuch favour as *ſhee* did; and when hee was come *into the houſe*, how doe her friends (after his moſt diſcreet diſcoverie of his meſſage) *affect* the thing, *offer* their *free conſents*, and acknowledge the matter, (ſo wiſely carried) to *proceed of the Lord*? to whoſe pleaſure, they all *moſt willingly* ſit down in the ſame: and thus, by *Abrahams* communication with his ſervant, (and without doubt he brake it firſt to God, in ſecret) and *the ſervants* well ordering of himſelfe, towards

God

God dutifully, toward *men deliberately*, *Isaacs* marriage is well made, hee hath a Wife, that was *a Crowne* and happy comfort to him all his daies.

And *what*? or *who*? would we have to perswade us hereunto, but the practice of *God and men*; and this their course is more then enough, to *shame* and *convince* the weake, and unwise carriage, *of many* (yea, *of most*) men, in the matter whereof wee now treat, whose manner is to *rush most rashly* upon this estate, *as the bar'd horse into the battell*, not *forecasting* any thing, *before*, nor *fearing* any thing that may come *after*, for want of advised care, and reasonable consideration; but *throw* themselves *desperately* into it, *dispatching* a mariage in fewer daies

Ier. 8. 6.

then

then it might well be *begun*, in, ſtriking the ſtroak of wedlock at a word, upon ſmall acqaintance, and little counſell, *catching* at the *Crowne* aſſoone as they ſee it, and ſetting it upon their *owne heads*, before it be determined, *by due advice*, whether of right it belong to them or no.

Of raſh marriage.

And, is their *any folly*, in things that fal out in our temporall eſtate *like unto this*? may we reaſonably conceive that theſe men ever thought *a wife* to be a *crowne*? ſeeing they beſtowed *ſo little conſultation* about a buſines of *ſo great conſequence?* Was it ever heard or read in any *Chronicle*, that any King did immediately upon the death of his predeceſſor, *crowne himſelfe*, (without any delay, or deliberation at all?) would it not bee thought

a marvellous vanity and indiſcretion beyond all compariſon, if any ſhould ſo doe? *Yes ſurely*, the world would wonder at his *want* of *wit*, that ſhould goe *this way to worke*. We know the maner of Princes, to be farre otherwiſe, for they (though knowne to be *heires apparant*, beforehand) uſe to ſummon and aſſemble their *Peeres*, to conſult with their *ſtateſ-men* and *counſellours*, aſſigning a ſolemne time for the *Coronation*, and thereunto they make moſt royall and ſumptuous *preparation*, ſuch as beſeemes the *excellency* of the action. But theſe *haſty idiots*, (of whom wee ſpeake,) have done much more groſſely in the matter of the *Crowne matrimoniall*, ſeizing the ſame, upon their owne ſilly conceit

of

of being heires, conſulting with nothing but *fleſh* and *blood*, (and it may be, with none but their owne) and ſo have bought and ſould themſelves, and altered the property of their eſtates, upon *lighter* termes, and as *little time*, as the *ſale*, or *purchaſe* of an *Ox*, or an *Aſſe*, *a Sheepe*, or a *Swine* would require at a wiſe mans hand. And ſo uſuall is this practice now adaies, that if record were kept of ſuch witleſſe carriage, the number of theſe *fooles*, would ſoone fill many *pages*, and ſwell iuto a large *volume*, in a little time, through the daily frequency of this egregious vanity.

But the practice appeareth (by that which hath beene ſaid) to be impious, in that it doth ſo farre degenerate from

Raſh and impious.

Gods owne practice, and the course of his *holy ones*, who have followed him therein, as that it directly contradicteth both *them* and *him*. What? did the Lord of heeaven, the onely wise God (who, in himselfe, hath *so much ability, no necessity*;) and have his Saints whom hee hath instructed in true wisdome *wisely advised* about this businesse? and wilt thou (a wicked, and witlesse person) *dare*, without *feare* or *fore-knowledge*, to foresee and shun, ensuing dangers, that do infallibly follow such *giddie expedition*, offer to adventure vpon it, to leape into it, pulling more upon thee in a *moment*, then *many yeeres*, or (it may be) thy *whole life*. will *ease* thee of againe. What? are yee *wiser* then *God himselfe*? are his

his *faithfull children fooles* to you? Gods *course*, his *childrens care*, (you see) hath beene otherwise then *yours*, and therefore, certainly, either *Gods owne*, or his childrens example, (*in consulting*) condemnes you of *fearefull impiety*, or your proceeding (*without it*) accuses both the *Lord*, and *them*, of *extreme vanity*; vndoubtedly, eyther they were *too curious* in doing *too much*, or you are *too carelesse* in attempting *too little*. But because *to charge God*, or *his children* herein, is to *blaspheme*, therefore let no flesh offer to lay any thing to Gods charge, or to accuse his chosen, but let every *transgressor* in in this particular, beare his *sinne* and *shame*.

And assuredly, the *shame* cannot be little, seeing it carrieth

The shame of rash mariage.

rieth such *absolute contrareity*, to that wherein the Lord meant to honour himselfe; neyther can the *sin* be *smal*, but it is out of *measure sinfull*, because the practice of some (whose proceeding in some other particulars, is censured ro be, both *sinfull* and *shamfull*) doth yet condemne (in this point) the *corrupt carriage*, of the *sots*, we now pursue in this reproofe, who herein are upbraided, by those who have beene otherwise very *impious*, or *unwise*, in the same passage. Doe but looke upon a few instances.

Gen. 34. 4.

Vncircumcised SICHEM comes to his father HAMOR: HAMOR hee goes to IACOB, to commune with him concerning DINAH; though *the defiling* of her were a deed de-

Examples which might shame rash and incosiderate marriges.

testable,

teſtable, yet, *this deliberation* taken, touching a further, and *fairer* progreſſion, (in that which was *foulely begun*) is commendable *in them*, and imitable *to us*.

Sampſon, how ſoever he was too ſicke of love, and overmuch *enamored*, yea, *bewitched*, with the beauty, and *ſmooth-face* of his firſt wife, yet hee did not poaſt preſently from the *ſight* of the *perſon*, to the *conſummation of the action*, but gets him home, breakes the matter to his parents, entreats their favour, furtherance, and aſſent, in the ſame: and in this hee is to be *commended*, though in the other to be *blamed*. Nay, the *divell* himſelfe wil confute thoſe fooles, for when he hath any *infernall plot* on foote, any *helliſh deſigne* to compaſſe, his Iudg. 14. 1. 2.

ner is, to *congregate and assemble his agents*, and to helpe them with al the *subtilty* he can convey into them; and they *plot* and they *prate*, they *argue*, and *debate*, they *discourse*, and *canvasse* every thing they can conceive, how to carry most *closely*, and effect most *cautelously*, what they intend and purpose to execute. Worse therefore, then the *worst men*, yea, then the *divell* (*who is worse then all men*) is their condition, who will not doe so much in this *one good thing*, as hee, and they, will endeavour *in every evill*. But this I have noted to *be a notorious subtilty* of his, very *malicious* and *mischievous*, that, as he maketh ungodly men very *vigilant* in that *which is nought*; so, would he have all men *remisse* & *negligent* in that *which*

is

is good; and prevailing in both theſe, (eſpecially upon impious perſons) hee doth wracke and ruinate irrecoverably, all that hee can inſnare, and perſwade, to make more haſte then good ſpeed, through the *giddie violence* of a *headdy* and unruly affection, which, (being but *carnall*, *ſenſuall*, and *devilliſh*) yet taking his courſe, can have no happier iſſue, then a *heavie curſe*, or (at laſt) a *miſerable croſſe*.

How much more comfortable would it bee for every man and woman, better to bethinke themſelves, (*and that ſeriouſly and throughly*) in this ſo worthy and waighty a buſineſſe? *Deliberation* never did any man hurt; *Wiſedome*, was never any mans *woe*, or *foe*, but the want of it hath bin bitter

to all such as have been over-hasty in things they have undertaken without it.

The evill issues of hasty Marriage

Miserable and lamentable experience, hath made it to apeare to every mans eie, and observation, what have beene the *wofull*, and *hellish issues*, of such *unwise* and *hasty matches*, both before God and man: it is *too easily*, and *too truely* observable, that many, who made such post hast to *weare* this CROWNE, have soone found it so *grievous and insufferable*, during a few *forlorne* daies, that they have made a *hard-shift* so live through that, to ease themselves of that insupportable plague they have *wilfully* shortned their owne sorrowfull and unhappy time, and fallen (*untimely*) into the *Crowners hands* for *their bodies*,

bodies, and (dying upon ſuch termes) who can conceive *comfortably* and not rather *fearefully* of the ſtate of *their ſoules*. Theſe (of all others) are they that juſtifie and make good, *Solomons* proverbe before mentioned, that ſuch a Wife is [*more bitter then death*] for lo, they chuſe *rather*, and thinke it *better* to *die*, then to *live* with her, and make as much haſte to their *miſerie now*, at they did to their *marriage before*.

I may not inſiſt, or dwell upon this particular, having divers more to unfold. Let us all (ſince ſo it is) reſolve to be ruled by the Apoſtles counſell (whether our marriage be to begin, or already entred upon) [*walke not as fooles, but as wiſe*]

and now, *knowing* what the wil of the Lord is, let vs endeavour to *doe* acccording to what we *know*, and then wee ſhall be happy in our deede, and have *praiſe* of God, and *approbation* of his people, and *conſolation* in our owne ſoules. And for ever hereafter, let us feare to offend in this reproved folly, beware wee of being (this way) faulty, for feare it come to us in our *matrimony*, as it did to the Iewes in their over-importunate deſire, and expedition, to have a *Monarchie*; they ſped farre worſe then ever they thought of, and ſo ſhal the man and woman that miſcarries heere, meet with mutuall miſery; HE that hoped of a *Crowne*, meets with a *croſſe*; SHE that made account of a *King*, be ſped with a *Ty-*

rant

to borrow as much as hee can. *To beg* from the Lord, *to borrow* from his children, all the wiſdome wee can, the more wee obtaine, the more able ſhall we be to *pleaſure* our ſelves, to *profit* others, and in both, to *pleaſe* GOD, who doth delight to have his children ſue unto him. His name is [*Counſellour*] and he hath promiſed to [*guide us by his counſell*] Seek his face for this, hee will be found of thee, and make thee wiſe in the way that thou ſhould'ſt goe.

Iſai. 9. 6.

Pſal. 73. 24.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Precepts of wisedome and skill in chusing of a good wife.

AND this is the *first generall duty*, in the businesse of our matrimony, which wee must be *carefull* to practice, if wee would be *comfortable*, in what we doe.

Marriage requires good insight.

Touching the *second*, it is more *speciall*, and *particular* consisting of our *exact insight and skill*, which it doth concerne every one of us to have in every of those things which this word [*Crowne*] doth further represent in a *Wife*, that wee may not onely, know, *that* wee must *deliberate*, but also

alſo underſtand *whereabout*, our *deliberation* muſt bee beſtowed.

And that will appeare to be in divers particulars, which wee will endeavour to goe through in their order.

And *firſt*, hee that calls a *Wife* a [CROWNE] doth undoubtedly take it for granted, that *as Crownes* are, *ſo Wives* ought to be of *the beſt ſubſtance*, & *conſtitution*, *Crownes* are compoſed (as was before noted) of the rareſt royalties, that can be had, the *fineſt gold* is for matter; and the ornaments of it, all other excellencies of *pearle*, and *precious ſtone* that can be got. Thus muſt it alſo be in this *comingall Crowne*, no *Wife* can bee a *Crowne to her Husband*, but ſhe muſt

wives muſt be refined women.

must be *refined* by Gods *Spirit of renovation*, and *purged* of all the *in-bred impurity*, and *base drosse* of *natures corruption*.

And in this point (as well as in that which went before) it concernes a man *to have his eyes in his head*, and looke well about him, for if a man have no skill in *mineralls*, nor be not at all seene in *mettalls*, he may soone be deluded with some sorry (though *shining*, and *well-seeming*) *counterfeit*, which will presently *deceive*, and perpetually *grieve* him. If nothing (*in proportion*) will make a *Wife*, but what will make a *Crowne*, all base mineralls must be *abandoned*, and gold onely *entertained*, in as much as it is Gods minde and meaning, that she should be a *Crowne* for mans greatest *ornament*, and *honour*.

Eccl. 2. 14.

Iron,

Yron, is too meane, being a mettall of *moſt ſervile uſe*, both for *man* and *beaſt*, it is farre fitter to make *chaines* and *fetters* for a *fellon*, or *villaine*, then a *crowne* for a *King*. *Lead*, is too *ſordid* and *heavy* too, *worthleſſe* and *ordinary*, it is *duskiſh*, and *dirty*, without all *ſplendour*, or *beauty*, and cannot content the eye, much leſſe can it adorne any thing. *Braſſe*, is too *baſe*, it hath ſome *ſhew* & *glittering*, but it is nothing *uſefull* in *glorious* things; it addes no *honor* to any thing wherein it is. *Copper*, is too *courſe* alſo (though it exceed all the former) yet, it hath no extraordinary *price*, or *uſe*, and therefore vnmeete to make any thing in this particular. All theſe are *ignoble*, and *inferior mettalls*, they make nothing in *crowne matters*. And

ſo

so are all *Women*, unmeet, and unworthy to be *Wives*, or to be accounted *Crownes* in whom any *adulterate*, and *base* conditions are predominant, as, in *Iezabel*, in *the wife* IEROBOAM, and divers others (noted by the holy Ghost) is too palpable; of every of whom (and all such as survive them, in futable disposition) wee may say both as the *Prophet* saith, *They are all brasse and yron, &c.* and the *Apostle*, They are but as *sounding brasse, &c.* having onely some *gorgeous appearance*, but no *good substance*, in them. It is good then, to be something insighted in this thing, and the rather because now, in this (which is called, the *yron*) *age*, a man may be sooner overseene, then heretofore, when the times were *purer*,

Ier. 6. 28. 29. 20.

1 Cor. 13. 1.

rer, and the perſons *better*, then now they are. *Droſſe*, and *baſe mettalls*, more *rare*, and *Gold* (the onely mettall for this uſe) was more *abundant* then in *our* daies it is.

Is t *ſhee*, and *ſhe onely*, that *is in requeſt* here, none but the *Golden-woman*, can make the man a *glorious Crowne*. It is not poſſible ſhee ſhould be his *honour*, or *ornament*, if ſhee be not *purified*, and made *precious* by God, as fine Gold. And to ſay the truth, a *golden-woman*, is *almoſt as rare*, and *full out as rich*, as a *golden myne*, which made *Solomon* proclaime, and cry her *rarity*, by that interrogation, [*who ſhall find, &c.*] and her *richneſſe* by valuation, [*her price is far above the Rubies, &c.*] as if he wold tell us that of *many* that *ſeeke*, *few doe find*, yea, he him-

Such a refined woman is rare.

himselfe assures vs, (in his owne experience) that hee sought *instantly*, *constantly*, and *individually*, and yet he missed of such a one as he sought for. His owne words import all these particulars, where hee saith, hee [*counted one by one*] [*his soule sought*] and that [*yet his soule seeketh*] and after all this, hee goes *without*, and *speedes not*.

Eccles. 7. 28.

Now, in things of *greatest difficulty*, there is need of *most* and *best guidance*, that wee may be well instructed, both how to *seeke*, so as wee may *finde*, and having found such a one, as we sought for, (so farre as it lieth in our power to discerne,) we may also be taught how to *try her* whom we have *sought* and *found*, whether shee be *inwardly* and *indeed*, that which in *externall*

ternall appearance, and *shew*, she *seemeth*, and would be thought to be by all that shall take any notice of her.

Set wee our selves then towards these two, *to wit*, how to *finde*, and how to *try* such a Wife, there is *wisdome* in learning, and there will be *welfare* in practising both.

Two things.

1 How to finde.

And *first*, for our *finding*, our care must be double.

2 How to try in finding.

First, to betake our selves to the *right person*, who only hath such to give.

Secondly, to goe to the *right place*, where such may be had as are given.

Touching the *former*, it is God, to whom wee must goe, we must haste to the *most high*, even to him, who is the *all sufficient fountaine of every good and perfect gift*. And in more speciall

1 Touching the Person.

Iames 1.17.

ciall manner of *this gift*, (as we declared before.) It is hee alone, that can burne vp all
Isai. 1. 25. our *drosse till wee be pure*, and take away all our *tinne*: none but *hee*, can *repaire* and *rectifie* our *nature*, by his *grace*, and make us *currant* and *cleane* in his owne *acceptation*, and his childrens *account*. We have shewed before, that the finding of such a Wife, is a *favour* of the Lord, must it not then follow, in all reason, that if it be a *favour to find*, it must needes be our *faithfulnesse to seeke* the same at his hand, who reserves this *one favour*, for his *owne donation* from his owne hand? as wee also have said before. *Friends* may be moved, sought unto, and sollicited, to doe us kindnesse in this case, but we must beware, that

we

wee *never* make them, eyther the *primary in order*, or *principal inestimation*, we must make use of them only, as *meanes*, *instruments*, & every way *underlings*, to the *Lord*; but, in no wise to seeke them *before him*, or depend upon them *without him*. It was never the Lords mind to take away from us *all use* of *subordinate meanes*, but onely to teach us the *true use* of them, hee did not intend to *displace them wholly*, but to *dispose them orderly*. And therefore he who commeth to man, *abruptly*, saying [*I would thou wouldst helpe me to a good wife, &c.*] and move his *friend*, before he have moved the *founder*, hee is judged (in this case) a *transgressour*, trusting in the *arme of flesh*, a thing which the *father of spirits* will not *endure*, but *revenge*,

Note.

as a *disparagement and dishonour* done unto him, as is cleare in *Asa*, and *Ahaziah*, and divers other more, at whose hands, hee tooke it exceeding ill, accounting himselfe as not
2 Chro, 16, 12 *sought unto* at all, if hee be not set in the *first* and *best* place.

And herein, the forenamed commendation of *Abrahams servant* is well worthy to be doubled, who, howsoever he went for *another* (*not for himselfe*) and had received from his Master, so *plaine* and *plenary* a commission, what to doe, and what not to doe, that hee could not likely mistake, or miscarry, in any part of his message; yet he preferres his *supplication to God*, and joynes *his prayer* to the *errand*, he had from his Master; God shall heare of him, *in the proceeding*,

as

as hee did of his Master *in the beginning*. And surely, this course of *Abrahams servant*, would well become *all the servants of Abrahams God*, especially, when they goe *for themselves*, and have not *such a good guide, and sufficient Councellour*, as this servant had. And in truth, who *would*, (were it not *wicked*, yea, *witlesse*, in any that *should?*) goe for any thing that is *truely good*, but onely to him who (being GOODNESSE *it selfe*) is absolutely BEST in himselfe, and *best able*, to doe unto us according to our desire. All men love in merchandizing for any commodity, to goe as neere the *welhead* as they can, to such as *make the commodities themselves*, and from whose hands they doe *originally* come. Goe wee,

We must go to God for this good Wife.

and do likewise, for this *course* is attended with *comfort*, wee are in the best way, to our best temporall good. To whom (saith *Simon Peter* in another case) *shall wee goe*] in this, let every soule say the same resolutely to himselfe, to whom (to wit, *in the first place*) shall I goe, to get *this blessing of blessings*, but to him who hath them to give, even *the Lord*, whose *heart* is *loving*, whose *hand* is *liberall*, who made such a *Crowne* for *Adam*, when the *whole world* could not yeeld one, who also can, eyther make me such a one, if I *have none*, or make her that I have such a one, if she *be none*. To him (therefore) will I goe, and *before him* to none, and *after him* to any, who (*under him*) may doe mee good. It was he

John 6.68.

that

that made *naturall minerall gold* in the *earth*, in the *creation*, he it is that can make our *earthly hearts ſpirituall*, and *myſticall gold*, to himſelfe by *regeneration*. Whoſoever would weare *this Crowne*, let him goe no other way with *any hope to have it*. So much for the *perſon* to whom we muſt goe.

2 Touching the place.

Our next rule muſt be for the *Place whither* to goe, touching which, wee may be well aſſured, that hee *to whom* wee goe (if we ſeeke *him*, as we ought) will tell us *whither* wee muſt repaire, the carefull obſervation of *the former* leſſon, will much helpe us in *this latter*. The Lord hath not *univerſally* ſcattered *theſe mercies*, and made them *common every where*, but reſerved them *apart*, in ſuch places whereunto hee

will send his servants to goe, and gaine them there.

Crownes are no *cõmon* things, every Towne, or Countrey, doth not yeeld them, there is *but one* in a *Kingdome*, and that is to be seene, onely at the *Court*, where the *King* resideth. And where the *King of heaven* comes and remaines, there (and no else-where) are *these crownes* to be had; in the *Courts of his owne house* where his *Kings and Queenes*, whom hee hath made *gracious to himselfe*, and doth purpose to make *glorious with himselfe*) doe constantly come, to his *holy administrations in publike*; as also *in the houses of his children*, where they continually dwell in their private condition; these places must those persons *visit* that intend to speede: to the publike

VVee must come to the Court of heaven for this Crowne,

publike place; *onely for obſervation* of ſuch as are moſt *frequent* there, and *familiar* with the *Lord*, who doth *know* him, and are alſo *knowne* of him, by their *daily attendance* upon him: And to the private houſe, for *Chriſtian acquaintance*, and ſeaſonable *execution* of our deſires, as wee ſhall apprehend cauſe, and encouragement, when wee come in any intimate maner to underſtand the ſtate of the party, with whom we have to deale. And our of *theſe places*, they are not ordinarily (if at all) to be found; no, they are, *more rare*, and *leſſe common*, then commonly they are conceived to be.

Our father *Abraham*, is noted by *the holy Ghoſt* to be excellent at this, hee giues it in

most special charge, and puts it in expressely as one *principall article* of his servants *oath*, that hee goe to the *right place*, to take a *Wife* for his son, which *place*, (that it may not be mistaken) hee doth describe to him in a double manner, both *negative* [*not among these Canaanites, among whom I dwell*] and *positive*, *but thou shalt goe to my fathers house*.] And whereas the servant might have objected and said: "*Sir, you dwell* "*here in a goodly land, where you* "*are well knowne to be of good re-* "*spect, and great estate, no doubt,* "*but you may have great matches* "*for my young Master neerer* "*home; it is here knowne what he* "*is borne to, and that hee shall be* "*well left, and therefore (if it may* "*stand with your good liking,) it* "*is not so good a way, for your*

Genes. 24.3.

sonnes

"ſonnes preferment) to ſend ſo
"farre to a place and a people,
"wherewith we are unacquainted,
"and they with us: beſides, who
"can tell that all will fall well,
"and that we ſhall be ſure of faire
"and ſquare dealing, among thoſe
"that are ſtrangers ſo remote; all
"your experience, in this paines,
"and time, may be loſt. *Abraham* prevents all this, (and whatſoever might be ſuggeſted) telling him, *that to that place hee muſt goe, and doe his beſt to effect the buſineſſe, which being done, hee is diſcharged of his oath, though the iſſue doe not anſwer* Abrahams *expectation.* Onely hereof hee is *unmoveably reſolved*, that his ſonne ſhall not match in *that vile place*, upon any termes. And how the Lord from heaven did ſecond, and ſucceed this holy reſolu-

tion, wee have heard, *his ſonne was moſt happily married, himſelfe exceedingly ioyed.*

The more juſt and righteous is their reprehenſion, who having a plaine *beaten way* before them (to lead them vnto the like) doe yet wander and go away from the *ſtraight path* which (herein) they ought to make to their feete; whoſe practice ſheweth apparant oppoſition to the Lords preſcription in this point. Doe not they deſerve the *tarteſt taxation*, that either *ignorantly*, (not knowing the *right hand* from the *left*) leave the *right*, and ſtraggle to the *left*, their care is ſo little to goe to the houſe of the *faithfull*, that they enquire not of *what houſe* they are.

The courts of Gods houſe are

of

of ſmall uſe and obſervation for any ſuch end, and ſuch as frequent them are in little requeſts (*for this matter:*) Little requeſt did I ſay? nay, it were well if they were not (for their familiarity there) in *leſſe reſpect* and *more reproach*, by how much they are obſerved (more then ordinarily the world doth) to frequent the ſame. Nay, (ſaies many an impious and prophane *wretch*) *if ſhe be a churchgoer, a gadder after ſermons, let her go, I will none of her, I cānot endure theſe preciſe Dames, who are all for Religion, and never well buſied, but when they are poaring in their Bibles, they ſhall ſit ſtill for me*, I cannot away with ſuch ſcrupulous fooles, that would be ſo *pure*. And upō the *barking* of theſe *helhounds* thus it commeth to paſſe, that ſome moſt wicked.

Reproofe of ſuch as come not to Gods houſe to be made happy in a wife.

wickedly *with-hold themselves*; others *are with-holden* by their *ungodly governours*, from such *publike places of piety*, and the performance of such *holy duties* as *God* requireth, and they that are *indeede godly*, cannot neglect; for feare, that if they be noted for such, their marriage may be hindered. *A miserable diabolicall conceit*, that the *best meanes* of happy marriage is now become a *maine* thing that *marres* it: *holinesse* is a hinderance to a *Husband*: who can expect any thing but a *curse* in his course, wherein the way of the Lord is relinquished, and the crooked paths of Satan are traced? What *hideous daies* doe we live in? and what *hellish hearts* doe live in these daies? when things *spirituall* are *impediments* to proceedings

ceedings *matrimoniall*, and that which is the *onely blessed sweetning* of the same, is reputed the *bane* and *poyson* of such a motion. No patience (but Gods) could passe by this, or put it out.

That persons should resolve to *forsake* the Lord, and *divorce* themselves from his sacred *Ordinances*, for comming together in marriage. Were it not just with the Lord to *forsake* them both, and suffer them for ever to goe their *owne way*, to their *present* and *eternall* woe? Iudge with your selves, whether the *divell* be not the *maker* of that match which *keepes out* godlinesse, and wherein *piety* must not once appeare, and shew it selfe, (*unlesse it be in the worlds size:*) And that *straine* the God

The Divell the match-maker, where Godlines is not regarded in the marriage.

God of this world can brooke well enough; but the Lord doth abhorre it, as wanting both *weight* and *measure* before him.

The places in which men doe now adaies seeke for wives.

And as (upon this infernall suggestion) the places are *neglected* which ought to be *frequented*; so on the contrary [*behold*] how *places of prophanesse, riot*, and *irreligion*, are *haunted* for this end. If Satan have a synogogue of vanity, and gather together such a godlesse crew, as *savour* of *no Religion* but *stinck* of all māner of *abomination*, if a swarme of sinfull and licentious persons, shall any where assemble to a *stage-play*, a *may-game*, or a *dancing match*; where *the Lord*, himselfe is blasphemed, his *day* even in time of divine seruice *prophaned*, his *Saints* deri-

ded

ded, *Religion*, and *holineſſe*, *vilified*; thither flocke theſe, and (uſually) ſuch as are, or may be obſerved to be moſt eminent in *this vanity*, are entertained as moſt excellent for *matrimony*. The land of *Egypt*, and gate of *Samaria*, were not more flockt vnto, and throng'd in the *famine*, then *theſe places* are to ſpie out and purchaſe *Wives*. And of what reputation, ſuch places have beene for ſuch purpoſes, may appeare from GOD, in that which his wiſedome hath left us, to peruſe and read in one part of ſacred writ, wherein wee find a ſtory well worth our conſideration: as thus. The tribe of *Beniamin* was groſly guilty, of a moſt foule & monſtrous fact, firſt of the abuſe, and then of the *murther*, of the *Levits* wife. Iudg. chap. 19. and 20. & 21.

Vpon

Vpon complaint made, the other tribes resolve to *doe iustice*, in the due punishment of so haynous a *crime*, and a *villany*, so *barbarous* and *detestable*. The offenders refuse to answer the matter *iudicially*, but will arme themselves *rebelliously* against all *Israel*, and fight it out. *Israel* must now deale *by hostility* with them, who resolve not to be tryed *by equity*. Well, they doe so; and at last *Beniamin* is *foyled* and hath *the worst*, a miserable slaughter is made, of all their *Women* and *Children*, not *one of them* is left alive; and but *six hundred men*, of the whole tribe. These few are forced to flie, and take a rocke to rescue themselves, and save their lives. Being there, *Israel* will surcease this bloody battle, lest

a tribe ſhould faile, and be extinguiſhed from among thē. Now to preſerve this tribe from utter periſhing, they begin to bethinke themſelves, what to doe to get wives for the remainder of theſe *adulterous* and *rebellious Beniamites*, to this end (note well their courſe, it was not more *mans policie*, then *Gods puniſhment*) they remember that there was an *uſuall* and *annuall* time of *dancing* at ſuch a place, and *thither* they ſend theſe *Beniamits*, to ſhift for thēſelves, that every one might *catch* or *ſnatch* a wife for himſelfe, by *fraud*, or *force*, as he could, that ſo he might ſpeed himſelfe among thoſe *dancing wenches*, deeming them the meeteſt for wives, for theſe *baſe miſcreants*. As for their owne, all *Iſrael had* execra-

Dancing wives are fitteſt matches for baſe miſcreants.

execrated him, that ſhould give his daughter to a *Beniamite*. Well, this advice being (though I cannot commend, either *them* that *gave it*, or *them* that *tooke it*, for certainly, it was *ſinfull in both*) they are thus ſped, with *ſuch wives* as were thought *fitteſt for them*, neither theſe *Beniamits too bad* for them; nor they *too good* for the *Beniamits*, but ſuted, *like to like*, as the Rulers of *Iſrael* thought.

This ſtory is well worthy to be conſidered, (ſo farre as *God* was *iuſt*, in the proceeding) of all *inconſiderate* perſons, to whom it may be a wholeſome *memorandum*, that they runne not ſo heedleſſely for Crownes, to *places*, and *perſons* of ſuch laſcivious demeanour, and vaine carriage. For in as much

much as the Lord would ſuffer ſuch to be *ſtolen away by violence*, and ſo baſely proſtituted, whoſe *dancing* was *ſingle onely* (of virgins) and much more warrantable then *ours* can be, which is *mixt*; how *heavily*, and *unhappily* may they expect to ſpeed, who ſhall be found among our *dancers*, who are *promiſcuous* of *both ſexes*, and *very impure* in *externall geſtures*?

Who can expect, or hope for a *Crowne*, where ſuch courſes are? if any doe, hee may (*poſſibly*) meete with a *Crowne* of *Thornes*, (ſuch as our Saviour had in the *high Prieſts hall*) that is, one that will pierce his ſoule, and wound his ſorrowes: and ſo, what with *ſorrow*, and what with *ſhame* (or it may be, *both miſeries* meeting in one) a mans life be-

Ioſh. 23. 13.
2 Sam. 23. 6.

becomes *loathsome*, and abhorred, to *himselfe*, and *noysome*, (through an evill name) to *others*. If any that went *this way* have sped better; it is Gods extraordinary favour, hee cannot thanke *the place*, or *party* he went unto, or promise the like successe vnto *any others*; nay, hee had neede blesse GOD *abundantly*, who let him escape this *eminent evill*, and advise *others* (by all meanes) to beware of *adventuring*, vpon the like perill. Can any man use *these places* (with any comfort) for *these purposes?* Would any state send to *Bedlame* to chuse a *privy Counsellour?* or will any wise man, saile into the *Ocean*, to fetch *fresh water? Can any good come out of this Nazareth?* have not the *best* found *bad successe*, when they have taken

Iohn 1. 46.

ken *the wrong way to their owne welfare.* What *heavy voyages*, have many made when they have gone out of their way: *Moſes* to *Madian*: *Solomon* into *Ægypt*: *Sampſon* to *Timnah*: Got theſe men *Crownes*, or *Croſſes?* hee that lookes into their ſtories, ſhall ſoone ſee what *their Wives* were. *Moſes* had a *very ſhrew*, a *Woman* of a *paſſionate*, and *moſt unquiet ſpirit*, a very *female-fury*, ſhe made worke for all the meekneſſe he had, though he had more then any man in the world. *Sampſons* Wife would no nay, but ſhe muſt know her Husbands heart, (*touching his riddle*) and tell tales to her nation, whereupon beganne the occaſion of *his hate* of them and *their enmitie* againſt him, wherein the Lord was moſt juſt, but, ſhee

Numb. 12. 2.

Iud. 13. 14, 18.

nor

nor they, knew it not. *Solomon* was as ill to passe (if not worse) then both, for (if his owne wife (*Pharaohs daughter*) were a *proselyte* as some do conceive) yet the other wives, he had, were *not helpers*, but *tempters* to him, to draw him both to *naturall* and *spirituall* impurity, against the *second*, and *seventh* Commandement. The day would be *too short*, and my discourse *too long*, if I should tell you of so many more, as might be mentioned in this kinde, whose carriage calls for our *reprehension* and *cõmiseration*, not for *imitation*: let no man make them *presidents*, but *premonitions*, let their *evill* be *our good*, and the *way* they tooke, out *warning*, not to come neere the same.

Beware, all you that would

be

be happy, if you would *Wive* well, take the right way, goe not to *Dan* and *Bethel*, to *Egypt*, to *Madian*, to *Shilo* among the *dancers*, but to *Sion*, where are the true *Worshipers*. Hee that (being warned) will yet be *wilfull*, going where God is not, may soone make himselfe *woful*. The Apostle gives us good counsell, [*Be not unequally yoaked with infidells*] the words may be understood *matrimonially*, though otherwise intended. The Lord, to type out the *parity*, the due *decorum*, and comely *proportion*, hee would have kept, (as well in this, as in other things) made a *Ceremoniall* law, against the unequall yoaking of beasts in the plough, as [*of an Oxe, and an Asse together*] the *morall* whereof was another matter, and

2 Cor. 6. 14.

In marriage we must take heed of being unequally yoked.

Deu. 22. 10. 11

and holdeth good in *coniugall*, as well as in *ſpirituall* affaires; *to wit*, that, if *for ſome* reſpects, they might not yoake their beaſts thus, *for none*, ſhould they ever yoake themſelves unequally. And what two things can be more *unſuitable* then the [*Sonnes of God, and daughters of men?*] *Iſraelites* and *Infidels?* the *beloved* of the Lord, and the *limmes* of the divell? When a man hath one, who endeavours and *drawes* all ſhee can, to *withdraw* him from God. Some men are adventurous and *daring*, yea, preſumptuouſly *deſperate* herein, in regard of their owne ſtrength, which they eſteeme able, to overſtand all aſſaults, becauſe that women are the *weaker veſſells*, they are not ſo much to be feared, and therefore,

Gen. 6. 1, 2.

fore, at the *intreaty* of luſt, covetouſneſſe, ambition, (or ſome ſuch other *Satanicall ſuitor*) they will try, what they can doe, and *hope* (ſo they tell us) to *conuert* and *reforme* ſuch a Woman, rather then, *feare* to bee *miſ-led*, or *perverted* by her.

But (beloved) *Hope*, in this (as in many other things) is a *Witch*, and carries men into *ſenſeleſſe conceits* of their owne; againſt the *manifeſt*, *miſerable*, and *perpetuall experience of men*, who have found it farre otherwiſe upon proofe. Who hath ever adventured, and not been *wrack'd*, or, *over-ſet*, or (ſome way) *ſunke* in this ſea? How often hath the *weaker veſſel*, made a *vaſſall* of the ſtronger? Doe Pro.7.27.
not we know that *one poore leane* and *faint iade*, will drag more

. ne evill of an evill wife. Math, 24.14.

downe the hill, then *three or foure (or more) ſtout*, and *ſtrong horſes can draw up againe*? The wicked woman drawes *downe the hill*, for ſhee drawes *downe to hell* (and that *deſcent* is more eaſie, then any *downefall* on the earth) and how ſoone is *preſuming* man, pull'd into perdition *irrecoverably*.

The very elect (if it were poſſible) had beene deceived, Nay, *deſtroyed*, by them: I might appeale to many, you may take good notice of *two*, (before named) *Samſon* and *Solomon*, both men of *rare and extraordinary graces*, yet, *pittifully miſcarring* by this meanes; or if you will ſee all your miſery in one mirror; looke upon *one*, even *Adam*, who was both *beyond* them, and all, that ever lived *before*, or *ſince*, yet *foy-*

in

in his full ſtrength, and *infected*, yea, *poyſoned*, and that in the *perfection of grace*, by his *woman* whom the *Divell* thought (as wee obſerved before) more *meete*, and *likely*, to *over-runne him*, then *himſelfe*, or any other inſtrument hee could chuſe, or uſe: and if he who was *without ſinne*, and had *armour of proofe* upon him, (even the power of created grace) was yet wounded to death? What man, or ſonne of man, that will come neere her, can hope to be out of her *gun-ſhot* and *battery*? conſidering he is but a *naked defendant*, againſt her *deadly darts*, and ſhe (through Satan) as politicke and prevailing an adverſary, as ever. If the *Paradice of God* may (poſſibly) yeeld *a baſe wife*, what probability is there

that any *prohibited place* can yeeld *a good?* and if the firſt man did fall *there*, how can any hope to ſtand, upon this *ungodly ground?*

And thus wee ſee, both *to whom* to goe, *whither*, for a *matrimoniall Crowne*, and the *parties whom*, and the *places where*, we may ſeeke, are now knowne unto us. But *all* is not done, when we have done *both* theſe, there is yet uſe to be made of more wiſdome, when wee are come to the *right place* and *parties*. Our Engliſh proverb is good, [*All is not gold that gliſters.*] Every one that is at the Court, hath not a Crowne.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Caveats againſt carnall and coveteous matches.

HEnce ariſeth an abſolute neceſſitie of ability, and skill, for *due triall*, to be added, to the (afore-ſaid) *diligent ſearch*; that wee be not deceived; with that which hath but an out-ſide, and is no more then *ſeeming*, though it *ſhine*. And in this our *triall*, we muſt have double direction; *to wit*, of ſome things, whereof we muſt *take heed*, as having no good uſe in this proceeding; and of other ſome, whereof wee muſt *take hold*, as without whoſe vſe, that which we attempt, cannot proſper.

In matrimony we muſt make due tryall, before we proceed.

Double direction in this triall,

1 WVe must be ware of two things,

The things wee must beware of, and carefully cashere, are *two*: first, the *carnall eye*: secondly, the *covetous affection*, they are both *Arch-traitors* to this *matrimoniall Crowne*, and yet as *very rebells* as they be, they *domineere* in too many matches, few are made without one of them, and *not many* without both. The *carnall eye*, is a bad chuser, the *covetous affection* is well worse; both are *too base*, to have any imployment in this honorable enterprise.

2 The carnall eye,

Touching the *carnall eye*, who can trust it, no man that meddles with *precious mettalls*, or other things of *great price*, will repose confidence therein, and *buy* upon *bare sight*: he that bears himselfe too boldly thereon, may soone become a

begger

begger: no, men are wiſer then ſo, they will have their *touch-ſtone*, and not deale, but upon *ſurer termes*, then their eye-ſight: and if the *naturall eye* be inſufficient, and may deceive in *mineralls:* undoubtedly, the *eye* that is *carnall*, will delude us in marriage. Was not the *vanity of the eye*, the *firſt undoing of man-kinde*? the *diuell* laide the ſnare that ſhould deſtroy us, in *this ſenſe*, it was the *eye-pleaſing* fruite, that (once) brought us *out of Gods favour*, and *under his curſe*, that ſtript us of *our glorious innocency*, and made us *ignominious*. Did not the LORD take knowledge of the ſame evill in the ſucceſsion of the world, when hee tells, that [*the ſonnes of God ſaw the daughters of men*] that is, looked

The eyes vanity.

Geneſ. 3. 6.

Gen. 6. 2.

luſtfully upon them, and ſo *made marriages*, and *had progenies* that were *monſtrous*, both in *nature*, and in *ſinne?* Was it not the *eye* of *Sichem?* the *eye* of *Sampſon*, that brought evill upon both? Hath ever any man had happy *ſucceſſe*, that depended upon *this ſenſe?* I thinke *all the eyes we have*, will ſcarce finde any *one*, though wee looke *as narrowly* as wee can, through all the *records of heaven and earth?* It is no wonder, though hee meete with a *counterfeit*, that goes by his *ſight*, for hee may ſoone have as much as he can ſee (ſcarce more) and what is that? Why, GOD tells us, a little [*deceitfull favour and vaine beauty*] which may beſott a *ſenſuall feole*, for the preſent, that

The evill match that is made by the eye.

Prov. 31. 30.

that he ſhall not once *foreſee*, or at all *feare*, the future *bitterneſſe* that ſuch a one *brings with her*, till it have overtaken him, and he feele it ſo, as he cannot flie from it. There is no *bondag* greater, then that whereinto the *unlawfull liberty* of the *eye*, hath brought many; no *ſlavery baſer*, or more *miſerable*, ſcarce any, *comparable* to it. *Solomons* younckerwas catcht ſo, and how contemptible his ſtate was, is bewrayed in two *baſe* (*but welbefitting*) *ſimilies*, to wit, of [*a foole going to the ſtockes, and an Oxe to the ſlaughter*] this, arguing how *pernitious* his condition was, the other, how *reproachfull*. Prov 7.22.

The *wantoneſſe* of the *eye*, hath not beene a little woefull to The woe of a wanton eye.

many; the parties *before named* may be our *remembrance*, with too many more, whose *wants* we might much bewaile, because of this evill, which bringing them nothing but *vanity* which they *see*, bereaves them of the *vertue* after which they should *seeke*.

Our Lord Iesus Christ was carefull to advise us better, when in the *Evangelicall exposition* of his Fathers Law, hee laies out the danger of a *lustfull eye*, and concludes it to be *adultrous* in some degree. And the Apostle *Peter* would also have us wiser then hee reveales their state, whose eye hee stiles with an *odious* (but due) epithite, [*eyes full of adulter*, *which cannot cease to sin*] affirming such to be, brutish in conversation [*like bruit beasts*

Matth. 5. 28.

2. Pet. 1. 2. 3.

lead

lead with ſenſuality] and that they ſhall be no better in condition [*made to be taken and deſtroyed*] nay, much worſe; for whereas in the beaſt is *no ſin*, it is ſinne in theſe *beaſtly men*, who dying *ſinners*, ſhall after death exceed the *beaſt* in *Gods iuſtice*, as in life (being men) they did ſurpaſſe them *in Gods Image*.

Good *Iob*, is ſaid to binde his *eyes* to the *good behaviour*, in this behalfe, and ſurely much better were it for every man to doe ſo, then (letting them looſe) to forfeit all his *true comforts*, for *their aberration* and *diſorder*. When *Solomon* would notifie the *Wiſe man*, and the *foole*, hee doth difference them one from another by their *eye*, telling us, that the one, *to wit*, the [*Wiſe* Iob. 31. 1. Eccleſ. 2. 14.

that any *prohibited place* can yeeld *a good?* and if the first man did fall *there*, how can any hope to stand, upon this *ungodly ground?*

And thus wee see, both *to whom* to goe, *whither*, for a *matrimoniall Crowne*, and the *parties whom*, and the *places where*, we may seeke, are now knowne unto us. But *all* is not done, when we have done *both* these, there is yet use to be made of more wisdome, when wee are come to the *right place* and *parties*. Our English proverb is good, [*All is not gold that glisters.*] Every one that is at the Court, hath not a Crowne.

CHAP. IX.

Caveats against carnall and covetous matches.

HEnce ariseth an absolute necessitie of ability, and skill, for *due triall*, to be added, to the (afore-said) *diligent search*; that wee be not deceived; with that which hath but an out-side, and is no more then *seeming*, though it *shine*. And in this our *triall*, we must have double direction; *to wit*, of some things, whereof we must *take heed*, as having no good use in this proceeding; and of other some, wherof wee must *take hold*, as without whose vse, that which we attempt, cannot prosper.

In matrimony we must make due tryall, before we proceed.

Double direction in this triall.

1 WVe must be ware of two things,

The things wee must beware of, and carefully cashere, are *two*: first, the *carnall eye*: secondly, the *covetous affection*, they are both *Arch-traitors* to this *matrimoniall Crowne*, and yet as *very rebells* as they be, they *domineere* in too many matches, few are made without one of them, and *not many* without both. The *carnall eye*, is a bad chuser, the *covetous affection* is well worse; both are *too base*, to have any imployment in this honorable enterprise.

2 The carnall eye,

Touching the *carnall eye*, who can trust it, no man that meddles with *precious mettalls*, or other things of *great price*, will repose confidence therein, and *buy* upon *bare sight*: he that bears himselfe too boldly thereon, may soone become a

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bigger: no, men are wiser then so, they will have their *touch-stone*, and not deale, but upon *surer termes*, then their eye-sight: and if the *naturall eye* be insufficient, and may deceive in *mineralls*: undoubtedly, the *eye* that is *carnall*, will delude us in marriage. Was not the *vanity of the eye*, the *first undoing of man-kinde*? the *divell* laide the snare that should destroy us, in *this sense*, it was the *eye-pleasing* fruite, that (once) brought us *out of Gods favour*, and *under his curse*, that stript us of *our glorious innocency*, and made us *ignominious*. Did not the LORD take knowledge of the same evill in the succession of the world, when hee tells, that [*the sonnes of God saw the daughters of men*] that is, looked

The eyes vanity.

Genesis. 6.

Gen. 6. 2.

lustfully upon them, and so *made marriages*, and *had progenies* that were *monstrous*, both in *nature*, and in *sinne?* Was it not the *eye* of *Sichem?* the *eye* of *Sampson*, that brought evill upon both? Hath ever any man had happy *successe*, that depended upon *this sense?* I thinke *all the eyes we have*, will scarce finde any *one*, though wee looke *as narrowly* as wee can, through all the *records of heaven and earth?* It is no wonder, though hee meete with a *counterfeit*, that goes by his *sight*, for hee may soone have as much as he can see (scarce more) and what is that? Why, GOD tells us, a little [*deceitfull favour and vaine beauty*] which may besott a *sensuall foole*, for the present, that

The evill match that is made by the eye.

Prov. 31. 30.

that he ſhall not once *foreſee*, or at all *feare*, the future *bitterneſſe* that ſuch a one *brings with her*, till it have overtaken him, and he feele it ſo, as he cannot flie from it. There is no *bondage* greater, then that whereinto the *unlawfull liberty* of the *eye*, hath brought many; no *ſlavery baſer*, or more *miſerable*, ſcarce any, *comparable* to it. *Solomons* youncker was catcht ſo, and how contemptible his ſtate was, is bewrayed in two *baſe* (*but welbefitting*) *ſimilies*, to wit, of [*a foole going to the ſtockes*, and *an Oxe to the ſlaughter*] this, arguing how *pernitious* his condition was, the other, how *reproachfull*. Prov 7.22.

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many; the parties *before named* may be our *remembrance*, with too many more, whose *wants* we might much bewaile, because of this evill, which bringing them nothing but *vanity* which they *see*, bereaves them of the *vertue* after which they should *seeke*.

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Matth. 5. 28.

2 Pet. 2. 12, 14

lead

lead with ſenſuality] and that they ſhall be no better in condition [*made to be taken and deſtroyed*] nay, much worſe; for whereas in the beaſt is *no ſin*, it is ſinne in theſe *beaſtly men*, who dying *ſinners*, ſhall after death exceed the *beaſt* in *Gods iuſtice*, as in life (being men) they did ſurpaſſe them *in Gods Image*.

Good *Iob*, is ſaid to binde his *eyes* to the *good behaviour*, in this behalfe, and furely much better were it for every man to doe ſo, then (letting them looſe) to forfeit all his *true comforts*, for *their aberration* and *diſorder*. When *Solomon* would notifie the *Wiſe man*, and the *foole*, hee doth difference them one from another by their *eye*, telling us, that the one, *to wit*, the [*Wiſe* Iob. 31. 1. Eccleſ. 2. 14.

man

Eccles. 2. 14. *man, hath his eyes in his head*] that is, they are where they should be, and hee can use them, and command them at all times; but of the other, to wit, the *foole*, [*his eyes are in the corners of the world*] out of his *owne possession*, and *power*, *wandring*, and *roling* every where, and *straggling* after every strange and idle object, as if hee were not *the Master* of them. None is so unwise, but hee can tell us which is the *better* of these two; and who will be so wicked, as not to follow the *best* hee doth know.

Prov. 17. 24. The Lord hath ever allowed unto man, a *lawfull use* of his *eyes* in *marriage*, hee never barred us, but of the *unlawfull* and *lustfull abuse* of them, hee would have men chuse for *sober contentation* of their sight,

ſight, that they may have *delight*, and *ſatisfaction* that way; that the *Husband* to the *Wife*, and the *Wife* to the *Husband*, may be the ſweeteſt and moſt pleaſing objects upon earth; to take vp each others *eyes*, from *all the world* beſides, that no other (in this regard) may once be thought worth looking upon, but the Man *moſt amiable* in his Wives eye, the wife *moſt beautifull* in his. The error is very pardonable, (if any at all) that they thinke each other the *comlieſt* that can be ſo incomparably *exceeding* all others, that they will diſdaine to caſt the leaſt *looke* (of this kinde) upon any. Hence it is, that the *Lord* calls our *wives* [*the delight, or deſire of our eyes*] giving us thereby to underſtand, *that every man*

Eze. 24. 16, 25

may

may chuſe a wife, ſo contentfull to his eye, that ſhe may give his lawfull deſire, ſuch full ſatisfaction, that albeit, hee may occaſionally ſee others, yet his wife muſt be the onely delectable obiect hee muſt deſire to behold. Seeing therefore ſo it is, that the miſcarriage of this *little* member may be ſo *great*, and that the Lord hath (yet) ſhewed a vſe of it, that is *ſo good*, let us be ſuitors to him that made our eies, to manage them, that they may be kept within the limits of his Law,
Pſal. 119. 38. [*not beholding vanity*] but may ſo wiſely looke upon naturall obiects, that our *beſt imployment* of them may be ever reſerved to looke after the *beſt things*. And this is the firſt thing we muſt *caſt away* in this buſineſſe.

2 The covetous affection.

Now in the next place, together

gether with the *carnall eye*, the *covetous affection* must out also, it will be partiall, and must have nothing to doe here. *Covetousnesse is too base a humour, for him that weares a Crowne, it enslaves a man to money, and makes conscience a drudge to coyn*, happy it were, if we were put to *perpetuall silence*, and made *utterly mute*, for it speakes no language, but that of the *horseleach*, or that of *hell, give, give*. This *speaker*, propounds no questions of the *best estate* of a woman, not a word, of *piety* or *religion*: but enquires (altogether) after that, which (without the *best*) is the *basest*, of *riches*, *revenues*, and *portion*: not what *worthinesse* is in her, but what shee is *worth*, in present estate, or in future possibilities at parents death, and

It is too base for a man that would weare a crowne to be covetous.

Pro.30.15,16

Hab.2.5.

if

if any thing may be expected then, he careth not how soone they were gone, and thinkes euery houre a yeere, till they be *out of the world*, as *Davids* deadly friends, [*When will hee die*] [*such is the way of all that are greedie of gaine*] saith *Solomon*. It comes not within their thought, to enquire, *whether a Woman be, (or be likely to become) a Crowne*, but ouely *what Crownes shee has, not what Crown she is*.

Psal. 41. 5.

Prov. 1. 19.

And in this particular, we are to encounter the *worlds error*, & to *contend with the whole earth* (as *Ieremiah* said of himselfe) the manner of the most of whose suitors is, to *begin* their marriage, upon the same termes, *Iudas* went about to sell his Master, [*What will yee give me?*] and if *Peters* answer

Ier. 15. 10.

make

make the *middle* [*Silver and gold I haue none*] the *couetous caitiffe*, will ſoone make an *end* of it himſelfe, and conclude it in *Pilates* wiues words, [*haue thou nothing to doe, &c.*] let the party be *what*, or *who*, ſhe may be, *iuſt*, or *iniuſt*, *holy*, or *prophane*. Let *heauen* and *earth* conſpire to make her moſt happy, this *baſe affection*, cannot brooke the *beſt qualification* without *money*; and with it, the *baſeſt* will downe with him, and be digeſted. He wil adventure (*for aduantage*) tho ſhe haue as many diuels as *Mary Magdalen* had.

Theſe are they that make the *excrements* of the earth, the *eſſence* of marriage; any *two*, may make a marriage that haue this *pelfe*; but if no wealth may bee had, hee ſcarce thinks it *lawful* to marry, though

though *the world* should want inhabitants, *the Church* members, and *heaven* heires to possesse it; all these shall cease (for him) and become *meere nullities*, before hee will helpe to multiply them without money. Sometimes, GOD gives over a man and a woman, and suffers *this suitor* to speake and speed; and by this golden twine, divers are drawne together, but note it well, (who will) it hath beene *probatum* upon too many, that they that have thus stood upon the *richest condition*, have had the *poorest affection*, and more then a little *misery*, hath *followed* them, whose matrimony hath beene so *over-ruled* by *money*.

The fruit of mony-matches.

The instances would be *too many*, and *too heavy* that might be

be produced of ſuch as have beene thus (ſhall I ſay?) *married*, nay, rather *manacled*, their affections having beene *fettered* with gold and ſilver, and *hanged* together with loopes and taches of this kind. Their *love* hath *lived* as long as their *wealth* hath *laſted*, and when once *their money* is gone, *their miſery* comes, if the *coyne decay*, *kindneſſe growes into a conſumption*; the Husband growing as *poore* as *Iob*, the wife proves as *peſtilent* as his was, a miſerable comforter to his heart, in a penurious ſtate; both weary of the beginning of beggery, and had rather *die miſerably*, then *live poorely*. Hence it is (as many have obſerved) that divers of theſe *gold thirſty* ſuitors have proved *rare Chymiſts*, to turne *ſũmes of gold*

gold and ſilver (unlawfully deſired, and lewdly ſpent) into *chaines* and *fetters* of yron, their *houſe* into a *priſon*, their *bed* into a *dungeon*, their marriage *ſolemnies* into a *ſeſsions*, wherin ſome have met with a *violent divorce* by legall execution, the *law* hath parted more then a *good* many of thoſe, whom *this kind of love hath married*. The Lord hath thus given over thē, who made *mony* their *God*, and gave ouer *him*. *He*, or *they*, who will *ſell nature* & *grace*, *ſoule* and *body* for *mony*, do make but a *miſerable bargain* of it, by that time al be accounted. Were it not, but that *gold* did *bewitch*, *ſilver beſot*, and *wealth blindfold*, and *hoodwink* us, it could not be, that ſuch *baſe traſh* (I doe, and may truely terme it ſo, in compariſon of the *true treaſure*) ſhould

ſway

ſway ſo much, and *beare ſuch rule*, as thus to *ouerbeare* all, in this bleſſed ordinance of *God*, raigning, and overruling ſo, as if the *heart* and *life*, of all true love lay in it; it *maketh*, it *marreth* marriages, ſome cannot (thogh otherwiſe they might, *lawfully*) come together for want of it, others will (tho very *ſinfully*) if they may have it.

Oh, that ſilly man could but diſcerne, the *deadly poyſon* of this *pelfe*, and how *unnaturall* it is, it uſes them *worſt*, that loue it *beſt*, and makes them the *baſeſt drudges* to it, that doe moſt *doate* upon it: for they muſt (to ſave money) be *debtors* to their *bellies*, to their *backes*, to their *bodies*, to their *ſoules*, yea, to their *God*, and neither ſerve *themſelues aright*, nor *God at all*, who have this

The deadly poyſon of pelfe.

Mam-

Mammon for their Master. Yee cannot serve *God* and *Mammon* (saith Christ) but you may be *slaves* to the *divell* and *Mammon*, both at once wel enough.

Math. 6, 24.

It is a *remarkeable* thing, and much to be taken notice of, that the Scripture doth so usually *debase riches* unto us, speaking of them with many *epithites*, of much *reproach* (as wee would doe of some *notorious varlet*, who had beene *bored* thorow the *eare*, or *branded* in the *shoulder*) it is the Lords manner to *shame* them unto us (almost) every where; he seldome speakes, but to *their infamy*, shewing our *folly*, who do too much affect them. *David makes* them *ridiculous*, who depend upon them, *Habacuk* admires their *madnesse*, who load themselves with them. *Solomon* doth

Riches have many epithites of reproach.

Psal. 48. 6.

Hab. 2. 5, 6.

Prov. 3, 8.

doth much *dissuade* our desires from them. And behold *a greater then Solomon*, even our *Lord Jesus Christ*, how hee, by many *mighty*, and most *weighty* arguments, doth endeavour, to *convince* them of *egregious vanity*, who are *over-desirous* of them, shewing in sundry particulars, how unworthy they are to be affected in the least, being *cõmon favors* to *Infidels* with *us*, and every way unable to doe us the *least good*, in *any distresse*; but rather ready to *adde* to our *miserie*, and make a *little sorrow great*, and a *great affliction insufferable*. The Apostles speake like their Master, and give notice to all men, that they are *snares*, and *toyles to entrap men to perdition*, *uncertaine deceitfull riches of iniquity*, *treasures of wickednesse*, with a great

Mat. 6. 25. 34.

great multitude more of the like appellation, declaring their *mischiefe* unto us. And surely, if in our Saviours *infallible* judgement, it be such an *extreme difficulty* for *one* covetous person to possesse heaven, is there not a *simple impossibility* for *two* to get in, who are tyed together, & made *one* only by these *linkes*? Mans aberration might have beene borne with, if God had (any where) *graced* or spoken well, of them; But being so *universally* dispraised and debased; what strange *infatuation* is it, to be *fond* and *eager* of them? *They that will be rich* (saith Paul) *fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many hurtfull lusts, that drowne men in destruction and perdition. The desire of money is the roote of all evill, which while some have lusted*

Math. 19. 23.

Luke 18. 24.

1 Tim. 6. 9.

Verse 10.

lusted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrowes: But thou, O man of God, flie these things, &c. This is the voyce of God, what covetous man can read it, and not tremble to heare himselfe sentenced so fearefully, both for *present misery*, and *future miscarriage* of soule and body eternally? No man can be to much *bent to be rich*, as the Lord is resolved he shall be *wretched*; *wretched* I say, and that every way, as (you see) the words doe shew.

Give eare to that which God saith, and let me speak unto you (touching this institution) in the same words which he applyeth to your *whole conversation* [*Let your* [comming together] *be without covetous-*

Hebr. 13. 5.

neſſe,] for it being not onely *the root of all evill*, but *idolatry*, *and not to be once named among Christians* ¶ how can they that "heare and ſee, *Gods hate* a-"gainſt it, once hope to have any thing but Gods *curſe* with it.

Ephes. 5. 3. 5.

But in all this, let me not be *miſconceived*; as if I did *condemn* or *diſcõmend* moderat, and due care, even of theſe outward things, in their *owne place*. No, hee who *careleſſely* neglecteth them, *wholly* offendeth, as well as hee, whoſe *whole care*, is to get them. Both the *extremes* are evill. It is onely *overcaring*, which God doth *forbid*, and we muſt *forbeare*. And this *exceſſe* in our affections, is moſt eaſily diſcerned to be in us, when the beſt things muſt *wait* on theſe, the world onely

riding

riding us, and all other things *naturall* and *spirituall*, *attending on foote*, or rather being *troden under foote*, by, or becauſe of theſe.

It is ſeldome ſeen, that a *coveteous heart* in the *Husband*, hath got a *crowne to his Wife*. If once in an age, a *Nabal* have got an *Abigail*, this unſavory vice *in him*, hath ſpoiled the ſweetnes of all her vertues *to him*, her *excellency* was his *ſhame*, whoſe honor ſhe might have bin, had he bin worthy to wear ſuch an ornament as ſhe was, but this crowne being on *his* head, was like a *glorious Diamond*, ſet into lead, or a *gold-ring* in a *ſwines ſnout*.

Seldome ſeen that a coveteous heart in the husband gets a crowne to his wife.

Pelſe was never any *match-maker*, where *precious Wives*, have beene ſought, or found; many that have beene (in

Money was neuer any match-maker.

regard of Grace) moſt *rarely qualified*, have beene (in the world) but *meanely endowed*; *much piety* hath not (evermore) had *moſt portion*, as is apparant in *Ruth*, in *Heſter*, and in other more, who could never have come to be ſuch admirable and happy *inſtruments* of the *Lords honour*, and the *Churches good*, if this *humor* had raged in the men that had them. And this I have noted, (and *who hath not?*) that this *accurſed humor*, becauſe it would not have thoſe that were *poore*, thought *religious*, and could not have others with *riches* to their inſatiable deſire, hath choſen rather to *forbeare matrimony*, and fill the world with *whoredome* and *baſtardie*, becauſe it is *better cheape*.

It were more eaſie *for me much*

much to enlarge my selfe against this evill; but I leave it for the present; it is the *Lord* onely that can purge it out of the hearts of all men. For a *conclusion*, remember and carry away thus much; that the best marriages have been *made without it*, and those wherein it hath had any *stroke*, have beene *baned by it*; few of them have much *prospered* in the world, but all have *bankrupted* before God, and beene *quite undone* concerning things everlasting.

CHAP. X.

The ready way by which wee may get an excellent wife.

AND thus much for the *evills* we must *cast off*, and *banish* in this businesse. Wee must now *bethink* our selves of those *good things* which may be helpefull and profitable to us, in our marriage proceedings.

I might tel you of many, but I will not *cloy* your memories with *needlesse* multiplicity. The maine, and most principall that I can commend unto you, (as most *naturall* to the words of our Text, and *neerest* to the way that you must take) is this.

That

That as hee who would ever be *interessed* into the *crowne of any Kingdome*, or *Monarchie*, must match himselfe into the *Kings race*, and take one of *the blood royall* to Wife; so, hee that would be sure to have a *Crowne* to his *wife*, must take the same course; *he must marrie into the house of Heaven*, with some one to whom the KING *of Kings* is a *Father*, and who is by grace (*for none are by nature*) of the lynage and of-spring of the LORD *of hosts*, all whose people are his *children*, all whose *children* are *heyres*, and all his *heyres* a *royall generation* being redeemed by a *royall blood*; ruled by *royall Law*; and reserved, to a *royall inheritance* in the highest heavens. The only way to get an excellent wife. Math. 25. 34. Rom. 8. 17. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Reve. 1. 6. Iam. 2. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 3. 4

The man that *meets* with such

one, cannot *misse* of such a one as is *an heire apparant to the Crowne of heaven*: and (being so) is also *fitted* to be a *Crowne* to her *Husband* here on earth. All the Lords *daughters*, (as well as his *sonnes*) are intituled to the *glorious prerogatives* appertaining to all the faithfull, and the *women* as well as the *men*, are made *Kings by Iesus Christ* (difference of sexe, is nothing here:) the *Kingdome of Heaven*, and the *infinite felicitie* thereof, is not *entailed* to any *heires male*, but estated upon the *heires generall* (male and female) begotten spiritually by him, *who bringeth many children to glory*: And this glory doth unspeakeably surpasse, all the happinesse under heaven. There is *no royalty* to *religion*; *no nobility* to *Christiani-*

Heavens kingdome to whom entailed.

Heb. 2. 10.

ty;

ty; *no birth to regeneration*, *no kindred* to the *affinity of the faithfull*; *no riches* to the *true treasure*; *no robes* to *Christs righteousnesse*; *no kingdome* to that *of glory*; *no Crowne* to that *of immortality*: Without these, all *earthly royalty* is but *rottennesse*; *honour*, but a *vapour*; the *best things* but *bubbles*, that *abide not* with us long, and are *not blessed* to us while wee doe enjoy them. But the honour which the Saints have is *celestiall*, their inheritance *eternall*, so *given* and *confirmed* to them by God in Christ, that it cannot be *shaken*, or *taken* from them, by *man*, by *sinne*, or by the *Divell*. [*Such honour have all his Saints*] in his eyes who accounteth all his children *honorable*. There is no way so *sure* and *cleare* to get a *matrimoniall*

[Psal. 149.

Isai. 43.

Crowne, as to get one of these.

Obiect. *Yea*, will some say, this is assuredly the onely way; who so is *thus married*, is *certainely crowned*, but all the skill is to know *such a one* from *other women*, how may shee be discerned? what be her markes, that will make a man so blessed?

Sol. Indeed here is wisdome, and so much the more, because the world cannot pleasure us in this *priuie search*, nothing that is *merely naturall*, or *ciuill*, can helpe here, wee must have *other*, and *better guides*, then *the earth* can yeeld. In the search of *naturall nobilitie*, a man cannot goe a *readier*, or *surer* way, then to the *progenitors* of whom he is *descended*, and if we finde hee comes of such a *parentage*, we presently conclude, *hee is*

an

an honorable perſonage. But this courſe is not *ſo ſafe* in this inquiſition, it holds not ever, neither is it at al *infallible*; but failes exceeding often: one may be borne of *holy parents*, yet a *prophane perſon*; *Religion* goes ſometimes *in a ſucceſsion*, but never *by ſucceſsion*, it is only of *election*, that any is found *truely gracious* and *faithfull*, no man can convey this to any *ſucceſſour*, or *ſurviver*. Therefore, though it be a thing *hopefull*, to come of a *religious lyne*, yet it is not *infallible*; we muſt ſearch for *ſure direction*, to diſcern ſuch a one as we now ſpeake of: Would any man (then) be *willing*, and *able*, to underſtand himſelfe well in her, whom he deſireth ſhould be his *matrimoniall Crowne?* let him adviſedly, and with care,

ga ther

gather together the markes of a *true Courtier*, one that is *indeed* neere *the Crowne*, and be sure to finde them in the party he seekes, and the honour and comfort *of her* cannot faile him. Some *few* I will make manifest, and they are these that follow.

The markes of a true courtier, even of a woman which may be counted a Crowne

1 Behaviour.

First, all *comely behaviour*, and *Kingly carriage*, a demeanor that keepes good *decorum* with true greatnesse: this is not found among *peasants*, or *base persons*, but it is ordinary with *Princes*: Even so, *a holy conversation*, *a heavenly behaviour*, that beseemeth *grace* and *piety*; expressing the *power* of *mortification* to the *world*; and *sanctification* to *God*, accompanied with a *Princely spirit* and *disposition*; a course *commendable* in it selfe, and *imitable* for

for *others*; this is the usuall *guise* of a *good Christian*; you shall not see it among *earthly miscreants*. Such as *Sarahs*, and *Abigails* carriage, they were knowne to be of the *right house* (even of the *regall lyne*) their *Christian* and *Graceſull behaviour*, assures us they were *crowns in matrimony*, and Gods booke perswades us, they are *crowned in glory*, inasmuch, as hee hath left their ensample for a patterne to all such as in the practice of the *same duty*, shall obtaine the *like glory*. As therefore, no *rude*, *uncivill*, *clownish*, or *unmannerly carriage*, doth become a *Courtier*; so neyther can any, that is *prophane*, *light*, *irreligious*, *unsober*, or *vaine*, sort with any that is a *true Saint*, a sincere professor.

Secondly, note the *company* of such 3 Company.

such a one; it will give a man *great aime* at the *quality* of the party, if one can well obserue her most familiars, w^th^ whom she best affecteth to converse. *Cõmonly*, men use to associate w^th^ those of *their owne sort*: *accidentally*, or *by occasiõ*, a man may be w^th^ those that are eyther *aboue*, or *below* his own rank, but *usually* to *frequent* both, were, both *presumption* and *baseneſſe*. *Princes* may have *some passage* with *mean men*, but their *familiarities* are reserved for those that are *equally honourable* with themselves. A *childe of God*, an *heire of heauen*, may have something to do (*in naturall and ciuil passages*) with the *children of this world*, but their *cõmunion* is only w^th^ the *faithful*, they cannot have *fellowship*, or be *ordinary*, and *intimate*, with any but the

up-

upright in heart, and they only, have their *hearts*, & shall have their *presence* asmuch as is possible. Now if *our soules* doe *long* after the *Saints*, & we most *unfainedly affect* to live with *them* above all others, feeling it a blessed thing to be among thē, & finding it a *burden* to be debarr'd frō them, by this may a child of God, both *know himselfe*, and *shew himselfe* to be descended of K. *David*, who once said [*All my delight is in the Sts*] nay, of the *King of Saints*, who himselfe hath promised his *presence*, and *cōmunion* with the *faithfull* to the *worlds end*, and moreover, to give them (after that) *endlesse communion* with himselfe in glory for ever and ever. *Good company entirely affected*, and *continually frequented*, is more then a guesse

[Psalm. 16. 3.

Matth. 28. 20.

of

of a good Woman. A man may comfortably take her to *his companion*; who desires none but *holy communion*: if the *heart* be there, when the *body cannot*, and the *body* with the *heart* as often as it *can*, who can wish a *better consort*, then one that is so *interessed* into *the fellowship of Christ*, and of *Christians*. It is for *base persons*, to keepe in, and be all in all, with *base companions*, a true *generous spirit* will disdaine, to make *inferiours* their *fellowes*, and *familiars*; and so will a *regenerate spirit* in a man or woman, especially in a *Woman*; because among all *Solomons* signes of an impudent Dame, her company is none of the least that concludes her, to be what she is.

§ Cor. 1. 5.

3 Language.

Thirdly, the *language* will dis-

discover much: *Court English* is the most *neat*, and *refined* of all other, they speake not, in any *rude* words, or *Barbarous* phrase, but the *purest speech* of any people. So a *Christian* cannot, but (*like Peter*) bewray himselfe by *his speech*: the *language of Canaan*, the *words of wisedome*, the *Law of Grace is in her mouth*, such a ones words are *gracious* and *powdred*. The *Hypocrite*, may open his mouth and offer to speake in *that manner*, as seeming (for some end of his owne) to affect *that kind of speaking*; hee may *lisp* out a *Sibboleth*; (and in truth, it would make an understanding Christian, both *to laugh*, and *to grieve*, to heare him attempt to counterfeit in this case) but the true *Ephramite* can readily say *Shibboleth*, plainly, and

Mat. 26. 73.

Prov. 31. 26.

Col. 4. 6.

Iudg. 12. 6.

and familiarly; his *tongue*, and *heart*, are both in *one tune*, not *prating* by imitation of ſound as a *Parrot*, and ſpeaking (as ſome thinke *Balaams* Aſſe did) to others, not to their owne underſtanding; but *feelingly*, *with affection*. When it is a *pleaſure* to talke of *piety*, a *delight* to diſcourſe of *Religion*; doubtleſſe, the Lord hath *poſſeſſion* of that *heart* and *tongue*. *By thy words* (ſaith the holy Ghoſt) *thou ſhalt be iuſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned.*

Mat. 12. 37.

4 Affection.

Fourthly, & laſtly, the *affection* is an *excellent evidence*: Who ſo is of the *race royall*, and hath right to the *crowne*, cannot *endure*, will not *forbeare*, or *brooke* any that ſhall call *their Title* into queſtion. If any ſhall offer it in *their hearing*, they ſhall

ſoone

soone heare of them: their hearts will rise at it, they cannot be quiet, or contain themselves, but will breake out into *detestation* of any, that shall speake such *treason*. *Right* so it is with a *right Christian*, *holy affection*, will utter and expresse it selfe where it is; if any *indignity* be offered to the *King of heaven*, *any iniury* to *his Saints*, if (where they are) his *name* be *blasphemed*, his *worship abused*, his *children derided*, any *good abased*, any *evill applauded*, their *zeale* will not be *mute*, but *manifest*, and shew it selfe; it will be with them, as with *Iob*, *David*, *Ieremiah*, they must *speak*, or *break*, like *vessells* without *vent*. Such is their holy *indignation* and *iealousy*, that they cannot containe; *silence* is an *impossibility*, in the case of

Iob. 32. 18, 19, 20.
Psal. 39. 2, 3.
Ierem. 6. 11.

Gods

Gods dishonour; hee that is the *true heire* to a *Crowne*, will not spare to expresse himselfe, he cannot put up any *opposition* to his Title upon any tearmes, there is no *muzzling* of him at any hand, hee is so sensible of the thing, that (*to dye for it*) he can neither *smother*, nor *dissemble* his mind.

And these (among many that are *visible*) are the most *infallible* markes, whereby a man or woman may be knowne; and where these are, *faithfulnesse* may be expected, so farre as *to man* it may be manifested: *to man*, I say; and *so farre as it may be manifested*; for some goe *too farre*, who (beyond all bounds of revealed truth) affirme, *that one Christians estate may be absolutely and infallibly knowne to another*; which

Whether one Christian mans estate may be infallibly knowne unto another.

kinde

kinde of knowledge, is the very *knowledge of God*, touching *his elect*, and the *knowledge of the elect* touching *themselves*; which how it should be certified to *any other*, as Gods spirit doth witnesse it to *themselves*, I cannot see.

But those fruits (being easie to be discerned) will discover them in whom they are in their *visible estate*; and whosoever doth expresse them *unfainedly* (to our best apprehension) we may *comfortably* proceede there, and hope for a *Crowne*. They that neglect these *land-marks*, their danger is fearefull, and their miscarriage will be *miserable*. It is righteous with the Lord to let them *want the comfort* of their marriage who are *wanting* to him, and themselves in the

meanes

meanes of the same: hee is well worthy to be given over unto her hands, *Who is more bitter than death*, who would not make use of these (or other the like markes) to descry how hee might come by one, whose graces would have *sweetned a bitter life*, as wee know the holy woman will doe.

These things are to be pondred on, both in regard of God and men.

Who so is wise will ponder these things, and so indeede doth it concerne every man to doe, and that *deepely*, if wee looke well about us, eyther in regard of GOD, or men.

I Of God.

1. Of GOD, for hee cannot endure any of *his family* should match with *the prophane*, or (as *Malachie* saith) [*the daughter of a strange God*] Hee hath many time and oft

Exod. 13. 32. chap. 34. 12. Deut. 7. 2, 3, 4.

in-

inhibited, and admoniſhed his people of theſe things, that no wiſe they doe it. And when they had broken the bands, and defiled themſelves with ſuch marriages, [*mingling themſelves among the Heathen*;] did not the Lord give expreſſe order for the *divorce*, and putting away, *both of the Wives* (ſo taken) and *the children that were borne of them?* and was it not done accordingly? and if the Lord were ſo reſolute againſt it, that he would neyther *endure* it to *be done*, nor being done, *confirme*, but *cantell*, and cauſe it to *be undone*, we have reaſon (I thinke) to bethinke our ſelves of the things propounded. Pſal. 106. 39. Ez. 9. 10. 11, 12 cap. 20. 2. 3, 4.

2. Of men, and both in regard of our ſelves and others. 2 Of men.

1. Of

1 Of our ſelves.

1. Of our ſelves, becauſe there can be *no happineſſe* in that match, which wee contract with one that hath *no holineſſe*: can it be good to be yoaked to one that is not good? Doth not God forbid it *as ſinfull*, and upbraid it *as ſhamefull?* ſaying, [*Shall I take the members of Chriſt, and make them the members of a harlot?*] and ſhall neither of theſe, (nor both) worke upon us? 2. Of others, as well thoſe, 1. without the Church, as 2. within. 1. Within the Church, for the encreaſe of the ſame, by a *holy ſeede*, 2. Without the Church, for *herein* onely wee excell them, they marry *creatures*, we marry *Chriſtians*; they have but *nature*, wee grace *with it*. In all other things they may ſpeede as well as wee, or (it may be) exceed

2 Cor. 6. 14.

1 Cor. 6. 15.

2 Of others.

1 Within the Church.

2 Without the Church.

exceed us, (let them alone, to please themselves, for *person* and *portion* we have the *start of them*, and *out-goe* them herein, that they, have *Wines*, wee *Crownes*; they *Women*, wee, *Women of strength*]. The only difference betweene a *Christian*, and a *Pagan*, is this prerogative which wee enjoy beyond them, to wit, *piety* and *holinesse*.

I could herein further amplifie, but I must haften and shorten: sith then, so many considerations doe bind us hereunto, let every man bee now resolved, to erect this inquisition whensoever hee attempts to goe about *a Wife*, craving of the Lord *the bleſſed illumination of his ſpirit*, that our eyes and hearts may bee opened herein; that all cor-

ruption and concupiſcence may be *ſhut up*, yea *ſhut out*, becauſe it doth *ſo often over-ſway*, and *evermore enſnare*, ſuch as in whom it prevaileth. It is the *good word*, and *ſpirit of God*, that muſt guide and helpe us, let us *goe* to the one, and *beg* for the other, that it may *come* to us, and wee ſhall ſurely ſee that [*true light that lighteth every man*] and by it, be able to underſtand things that differ, and diſcerne a *true crowne* from a *counterfeit*.

Iohn. 3. 9.

Obiection. But here will ſome put in, and tell us, that all this is to little purpoſe, that wee have thus preſſed upon men in the particulars before going; ſeeing when a man ha's done all hee can, and followed this counſell as neere as is *poſſible*, yet (the courſe being not *infallible*)

fallible) he may bee never the *neerer*, or *better*, when all comes to all; he may *misse* of the marke he aymes at, and *meete* with some *counterfeit*; and so, being deluded, he may be miserable all his dayes, in her whom he sought, for his *crowne* and *comfort*.

Answer.

Nay, but soft a little; these premisses will carry no such conclusion; it doth not follow, that you must *not be faithfull*, because the issue is *not infallible*; and that you may neglect your *duty*, because you may bee *deceived*, when you have done it. This is the *Divells logike*, to reason thus; *I may faile in what I doe*, therefore *I may faile to doe it: The event may deceive me*, therefore, *I will not attempt or enterprise the matter* which God commands me.

It is ill to say that we will not bee faithfull because the issue or successe is not infallible.

Feare, deare brethren, *feare*, to argue thus; if this be *reaſon*, I know not what is *treaſon* againſt God. For note, how many *notorious* ill conſequences, will follow this *diabolicall infatuation*. It *binds Goá*, to give us *abſolute iſſues, to all* the duties he doth require, even *in euery thing* in this life; whereas (though all theſe ſhould faile) yet it is more, then wee can challenge (by any thing we can doe) that wee may depend upon the *finall* and *eternall iſſue*, as infallible; to wit, *the aſſurance of our glory with him*; which *one thing* being abſolutely aſſured to all Saints, is more then a full mends, for all *uncertainties* here. Againe it *binds us* to *no more obedience then wherein we are ſure to ſpeed well, in this world*, and

The ill ſucceſſe of ſuch diabolicall diſputes.

and then wee must not only overpasse *this*, but also, *many* other duties and practises, even all, whose *ends* are such as wherein we may *erre*: and so not only what wee have to doe in *matrimony*, but in many passages of *Christianity*, must lye neglected and undone; as we might abundantly instance. Againe, wee obey not God for *his command*, but for our *owne ends*, and so it is not *conscience of well doing*, but *comfort of well speeding*, that prevailes with us to performe our part of obedience: wee ayme not at the *glory* of him who enjoyneth it, (which ought to be, the *predominant*, and *overruling* ground, and end, of all our actions) but only at the *certaine good*, wee shall get by it. A multitude more, of such

miſchievous and *curſed colle&tions* would enſue, if we ſhould ſtand upon theſe tearmes.

But know we, that we are *bound* to doe our part, and God hath *tyed us* to that, though, he hath *not bound himſelfe* (evermore) to give ſuch iſſues as we expect, in the preſent payment of ſuch *temporary comforts* as we looke for. True it is, we *may be deceived*, doe wee all we can; but it is as true, we *ſhall deceive our ſelves* if we doe it not, nay, wee ſhall *rob God* of the glory he requires, and we muſt render to *him*, as is due; howſoever it *fare*, or *fall* out with *us*, in the *end* of what we doe. *To be deceived*, may be *ſome puniſhment* but it is *no ſin*, we are meere *patients*, and much pittied; But to *deceive our ſelves*, or, *rob God*, is a

ſin

ſin and ſhall have *puniſhment*, without *pitty*. Think which of theſe two is the more ſufferable.

Goe on then, doe your part, give God his due, *entruſt* the *iſſue* upon him: be not *diſheartened* there is hope of that good event you doe (in the particular,) looke for; if it doe ſo come to paſſe, that *that* faile, yet know you ſhall have *ſome good iſſue*, howſoever. Many have *ſped well*, that have *done well*, but ſome have miſcarried (you will ſay) when they have endeavored and done their utmoſt, and been peſterd with *wofull wives*. Be it ſo. But withall, I pray yon to remember and reſt upon thoſe particulars which *will not*, nor, *can* deceive you. Thoſe that in conſcience have walked ac-

We muſt doe our dutie, and entruſt the iſſue upon God.

cording to this rule, have their *peace with God*, in the discharge of their duty, that they are sure of, howsoever it goe with them in any other regards. And though it doe so come about, (that the *wife, so well sought*) proove *naught*, yet, we having in all good conscience endeavoured our best (every way) the Lord whom we have obeyed herein, will give us one of these issues (if we be not wanting in the meanes *after* marriage, as wee were not *before*:) either, he will make the *bad* Wife *good*, and give her the graces wee hoped for (and saw no other but) shee had *before*; or if not, hee will strengthen, and enlarge our graces, and make us able to stand under *her evills*, and *our owne* too; as hee did *Moses*, whose

whose meekenesse exceeded all mens, as his *Wives frowardnesse* did *most Womens*; and, as hee did *Abigail* whose *wisdome* and *amiable disposition*, did abound, as did her *Husbands folly*, and *surly carriage*, towards her, and others. And many times, the *Wives ungodlinesse* is the *grindstone* of the *Husbands graces*, and the Lord doth wonderfully honour himselfe in doubling, and multiplying the *power of grace* in the *man*, where there is such necessity and use of it in the *Wife*. And if a man doe *imploy grace*, upon her *corruption* (as he ought) he will make a *good* bargaine of it, and soone grow *rich* in grace. But we shall say more to this particular in our *intended treatise*, which we mentioned before, and hope (the

Lord assisting) to *finish*, and *publish*, in due time for thy more full satisfaction in this and divers others particulars. In the meane time, summe up all, and sit down and rest here, that in this *seeking* thou shalt *honour the Lord*, and (*likely*) get a *crowne matrimoniall*; but *certainly*, a *crowne eternall*, as the reward of thine *obedience before*, and *patience after* marriage. So that now I hope the duty shall bee done, though this end may be *doubtfull*, and shee whom thou seekest may be *deceivable*.

And thus farre have wee spoken touching *that skill*, which every one must labour to attaine, touching *the Woman*, who is to make a *matrimoniall Crowne*, wherein wee have endeavoured (though weakely)

weakely) to discover the due proportions between her self, and that whereunto shee is here compared. It is now high time, wee haste to betake our selves to some use of all that we have said; and that will be *two fold*: both concerning *matrimony it selfe*, and also concerning all *such persons* as *have*, or *may have*; to doe in the same.

CHAP. XI.

The Vses of this right rule of getting an excellent wife, together with the enemies and abusers of marriage.

TOuching *matrimony it self*; the truth that hath appeared *Vse* 1. Of the privledges of Ma-

trimonie a-bove a ſingle life.

peared to us in the particulars we have ſpoken, doth much magnifie and commend unto us the true *excellency*, and *glory* of the ſame beyond *ſingle life*; the which *marriage* doth *ſurpaſſe* and *excell*. And that is evidenced thus. If a *wife*, who being but the *weaker Veſſell*, the *meaner part*, the *inferiour party* in a marriage, bee a Crowne in regard of *her honor*, and *worthineſſe*: ſurely, a *Husband* who is the more *ſuperiour* and *better* part, muſt needs be beyond the *Wife*; and if the *worſe* of two, have ſuch *worth*, as is repreſented by a thing *ſo glorious*; and the *better* have more *worthineſſe* then *ſhe* hath? what are *both theſe* being combined together? who can reach or rate, the full valuation of them both, and of the eſtate

ſtate wherein they are? in which eſtate (to wit, of marriage) all this honour and excellency doth conſiſt? What *ſingle perſon* can (with common ſenſe) *ſet* himſelfe, or *conceit* his eſtate, *equall* (or any thing neere) ſo *honorable*, as is this *dignity of matrimony*, attended with this *double honour*? If God have thus *graced* marriage; who dares *diſgrace* the ſame, in oppoſing that unto it, and preferring that before it which hath no ſuch glory in it? Where did God ever honour *ſingle life at the beſt*, as as hee hath done *matrimony at the leaſt*? can any man inſtance any honour in ſcripture appertaining to it, which may carry any compariſon with this? A *crowne* of ſome fading *flowers* is ſometimes ſet upon the head.

A ſingle life not comparable to a marriage eſtate.

head of *virginity*, but this is only according to the *worlds cuſtome*, not by any *preſcription from God*. But it is *God himſelfe* that compareth *this eſtate* to a *crowne*, and (in ſo doing) crowneth it with that honor which *ſingle life* cannot receive.

The *ſhavelings of Rome* (the honeſty of whoſe lives, will not let that haire grow, which they pretend to be taken off, by the holineſſe of their order) theſe, are the greateſt *diſgraces of this ſacred, and excellent inſtitution*, and the only *advancers* of ſingle life above the ſame; I perceive ſome in *policy* will *vaunt*, of that which they doe moſt *want*:) but upon what grounds or reaſon, thinke yee? ſhould wee ſcan their prooſes, wee ſhould finde them as *balde* as

their *pates*; not worth a *haire*; but the verieſt *froth*, the moſt *feeble*, and *idle* arguments, that ever *addle* head, or *Idiots* braine invented; but they themſelves will *ſave* our labour, and *refute* all their owne allegations to this end, if wee doe but remember and ponder well, how eagerly they lay about them to prove *marriage*, a *Sacrament* which howſoever in vaine, they doe indeavour; and *no wiſe man* will ever beleeve it: yet *every foole*, can ſee, that whatſoever is urged to proove it to be ſo, doth argue and conclude it to bee more excellent then to habit a ſingle life, whereunto they offer no ſuch honour.

Bald and ſillie reaſons from Romaniſts for a ſingle life.

So that hence it is manifeſt, (though we ſay nothing againſt it) that *one* of their *do-*

tages

tages doth devoure *another*, and the *truth* overturnes *both*, Oh, the egregious grosseneſſe of theſe *Romiſh Rubbies*. *Matrimony* is a *ſacrament*, yet the *beſt members* of their Church (to wit, *their clergy*) may not meddle with it; if a *prieſt* marry, he ſins, (and to prove it) the *Pope* out of his *infallible chaire* (*but who ſees not that herein, he is quite beſide the cuſhion*) will pervert, moſt prophanely againſt him, the pure word of God, [*They that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God*] *O impious*, and *infernall expoſition*, and ſo much the more *execrable* becauſe it comes from him that *cannot erre*. *Virginity* is no *ſacrament*, yet the prieſt that vowes it, *doth merit*; *matrimony* is a *ſacrament*, & yet it is *a mortall ſin*, for any of *that order* to enter into

Matrimonie made a Sacrament.

Syricius the Pope.

That place Rom 8.8. vildly wreſted to ſingle life.

into it. But who would follow them in this *filthy way*? wherin they *ſtinke* already *before men*, and will *ſink* for ever *before God*, if they return not to the truth; wherunto we *adhere* according to duty, & perſwade our ſelves that *ſingle life is good*, but *marriage* in many reſpects is *better*. If *once* in the *Churches perſecution* it were *accidentally* preferred (not as *any way* more *excellent*, but as, at that time, *ſome way* more *expedient*;) may this conclude any *perpetuall eminency* it hath above marriage? True it is, that *once* (conſidering the time) it was ſaid [*it is not good for a man to touch a woman*] the Church was in diſtreſſe, therfore during thoſe daies, it was beſt to be *ſingle*. This was ſpoken *occaſionally*, to ſome perſons in the ſtraightnes of one time. 1. Cor. 7. 1.

But

But if we will heare the Lord speake *intentionally*, and *universally*, his words are these, [*it is not good for man to be alone*] and again [*wo be to him that is alone*] & *this voice* of *God*, was of such *force*, that the Apostle grants it lawfull (even in the worst times) to *take wives*, rather then to sinne *for want of them*. So then *that* is the *generall rule* which was first given to all persons; *this* is onely a *temporary exception* from it, in some case; and which of the *two*, must carry the truth, all men know. I would they would tell us whether *virginity* would ever have *filled the world*, *propagated the Church*, and *furnished heaven?* No, the Lord must rather have *raised himselfe sonnes & daughters of these stones*, and have wrought a *miracle* to have

Gen. 2. 18.

Eccles 4. 10.

1 Cor. 7. 2.

A threefold good of marriage.

Mat. 4 3.

have made him *members* of his body. And verily, I thinke he would *rather*, and *ſooner* have *ſo* done, then take them out of *their ſtewes*; whereof theſe *profeſſed virgins*, are the principall *ſupporters*. And (if records may be believed) wee may ſafely, and confidently avouch that none have *ſpoyled more virgins*, then theſe who have *applauded virginity*; Who have filled the earth with *more baſtardy*, then theſe whoſe mouthes do magnifie *chaſtity*? It were ſo much the leſſe vile, if *inferiour prieſts* onely, were attainted; or if *ſome* alone, of the ſuperiour ranke were foule; but even the *principall* (to wit, the *Pope*) have not bin all cleane, and unpoluted in this particular; even *hee that now lives* hath a *brave fellow*, to his

The Popes unerring chaire brings forth a Bastard and this is the fruit of vowed celebate.

his *base sonne*, whom hee hath created a *Cardinall*, and doth call *Nephew*, as it is noted to be the custome of these *holy fathers*, to doe. Thus hath the Lord cast contempt into their *faces*, who have disgraced his ordinance, and made them vile, who have *vilified matrimony*. For our parts, we will not take away, or extenuate, any, due praise that God giveth to *a single life*; onely, it may not *pearch* aboue *marriage*. Let either have his owne. And if the Lord may be Iudge, hee will soone determine the doubt; for, *undoubtedly*, that is the best estate of the two, under which hee doth represent himselfe unto us, when hee would lay out *the excellency of his love and kindnesse* most largely before us; and that is (so far

far as I haue obſerv'd in Scripture) *evermore* under *marriage*; never under *virginity*. Wee often reade, that hee is the *Bridegroome*, and the *Husband*, and the *church* (with her members) the *Bride*, and the *Wife*; and *her he will marry to himſelfe in everlaſting love*; and one whole booke (we know) is an *Allegory* of this ſubject, wherein hee declareth, (though in darke termes) how *endeared he* is to *us*, *wee* to *him*. Indeede, it is true, that *the members of the Church* are ſometimes called *Virgins*, to teach them how *pure*, *unſpotted*, and *gracious*, they ſhould be, in all manner of holy converſation *perſonally*: but it is *their married ſtate*, *their union* to Chriſt Ieſus, that makes them *glorious*. So then, (it ſeemes) that *virginity* doth repreſent

Iſai. 54. 5.

Reve. 19 7.

Hoſ. 2. 19. 20.

The Song of Songs.

How the members of the Church are called virgins.

preſent our *perſonall ſtate of grace*; *marriage* our *relative ſtate of glory*; and (if this be true) let any man ſay, which of theſe two is the *more renowned* of God, and to be *moſt honoured* of us. But we will not ſtrive any more here about, unleſſe it be in prayer to GOD, for ſuch whoſe opinion is ſo *falſe*, and practice ſo *foule* in this particular; that (if it be poſsible) *the thoughts of their hearts may be changed*, both herein, and in whatſoever elſe, their minds are *infatuated with ſtrong deluſion*. And thus, in deſire of their *illumination* we leave them, to that God, who hath *thus farre* given them over, to judge themſelves *unworthy*, and *incapable* of the comfort of *matrimony*, but may in *due time* draw them out of this

Acts 8 22.

this and all other darkneſſe.

And ſo from theſe enemies of marriage, wee proceed to admoniſh others (who *in iudgement* hold it lawful for all men to marry) yet in *practice* are no great friends to the honour of it, but by unwiſe proceedings in it, have brought *groſſe diſgrace* upon it. It is too true, that many divine truths, have no greater adverſaries, thē ſom are, that *in words*, (*willingly*) profeſſe them, and yet in deeds (*ignorantly*) deny them. *Marriage* hath met with ſome of theſe, *to wit*, ſuch as out of an *over-eager* affection of a *matrimoniall condition*, having beene *too heedleſſe* in the *beginning*, are likewiſe *too headdy* in the *proceeding* & *accompliſhing* of their *haſty* deſires, and draw *ignominy* upon *this honourable inſtitution*

Against stolen marriage.

tion, in running to *lawlesse Churches* (as they are called) to catch some *unseasonable opportunitie* to dispatch their *louelesse matches*, for *such* doe the most of them *quickely* prove. This course is not more *ordinarily*, then *truly* called *stealing of a marriage*, and that with too much *truth* and *reason*, for in most (if not in every of them) *Parents* are robbed of their *children*, and *God* of *the glory of his name*, and *ordinance*; for these *concealed marriages* are not *openly* undertaken as an *honorable ordinance*, but rather, as some *iust* & *shamefull pennance*, wherein men wonderfully affect *closeneſſe*, and *secrecy*, and faine would *come*, and goe, *unseene*. The God of heaven hath met with many of these *secret* and *sinfull* marriages, and

Gods anger against Secret, or stolen marriages

rewarded

rewarded them openly, in making many to become witneſſes of their *daily miſery*, who never once dreamed of their *darke matrimony*, begunne and ended in the night.

How much more comely, and comfortable would it be to make *agreement* betweene our *opinion* and our *practice*, and to reconcile *theſe*, one to another. That they doe ſo, doe verifie that word of *Solomon* who doth *figuratively* here, and that of the *Apoſtle*, who doth *plainly* affirme, *marriage to be honourable*. And ſuch as goe *legally* about it, and *currantly* through with it, will the *Lord* crowne with glory and honor, and make their *wedding day*, a day of conjugall coronation to them, wherein there ſhall be *ioy*, and *gladneſſe*, and unto them

Heb. 13. 4.

them it shalbe said, *Come forth yee daughters of Sion, and behold King Solomon, and the Crowne wherwith his mother crowned him, in the day of his marriage, and in the day of the gladnes of his heart.* And thus farre our first use, touching *matrimony it selfe.*

2. Now to our second, and therein wee must descend to the *parties* whom it *doth*, or *may* concerne; *to wit*, all *sorts* and *states* of men and women, *Husbands* and *Wives*, *Parents* and *children*, to all in *generall*, and every one in his owne *particular*, doe these particulars appertaine.

To parents. We will beginne with *Parents*, unto whom this truth doth call, and cry aloud, expecting much at their hands. If a *Wife* be a *Crowne*, they have neede bestirre themselves to bring

bring up their *daughters* ſo, as that they may be ſuch; which is done, by hearty and daily *ſupplication* to GOD, for them, and by wiſe and holy *education* of them: and in their faithfull endeavour and uſe of both theſe, they may moſt *happily* hope the Lord will harken unto them, and ſecond *their care* with *his power*; to purge our natures *droſſe*, and melt, and make them *anew*, by his *refining ſpirit of grace*. Oppoſite unto this, (and unto all preſidents of age paſt) is that *ſtrange expedition*, which many *parents* make, who doe *poaſt* their children to matrimony, even in their *child-hood*, *nonage*, and *minority*; A practice to "be *pittyed* with the *greateſt* "*commiſeration* that our ſoules "can expreſſe to the children,

Againſt haſty marriages of children too young.

"but in the parents to be blamed, with the *severest reprehension*, as most *impious* and "*unreasonable*. *Kings*, indeede "are sometimes *crowned* in "their *cradles*, but this their "*early coronation*, is for such respects as are very speciall "and important; as the *prevention* of *civill debate*, and *rebellion*, the *establishing* of *peace* and "*tranquillity* in a Kingdome; "that upon the death of the "predecessor immediatly the "*subiects* may know, whom "they ought to acknowledge "as their *absolute Soveraigne*; "that so there might be no "*mutiny* or insurrection. But "that any should be in this "kind so crowned *matrimonially*; is (be the pretence what "it will) *unseasonable and senselesse*; being the onely way to breed

The pretences of over-early marriages are both unseasonable and senseles.

" breed that in a *family* (that
" by the other is prevented in
" a *monarchie*) to wit, *unnaturall*
" debate, betweene *Husband* &
" *wife*, and to kindle that *consu-*
" *ming fire*, of civill discord wch
" will *over-run* all present hap-
" pinesse, and *frustrate* the *fu-*
" *ture* hopes of the comforts,
" wch both might have had, &
" enjoyed, had the persons bin
" capable of this conjugall
" condition, whereinto those
" parents doe cast them with-
" out all *care* of the childrens
" good, or *conscience* of God in
" this case, who would have
" none *enter upon it*, till they be
" (in some good measure) *pre-*
" *pared for it*, which children
" (in the least) cannot be.

" Was ever any *Gold-smith*
" so unwise, that he would go
" and take *gold ore* as it comes

The marriage of children too young set forth by a fit similie.

" *immediately* out of the *veynes*
" *of the earth*, and attempt in all
" haſt, to make a *Crowne* of it
" (as it is) before it be *refined?*
" what *child* would not laugh
" at his *fillineſſe*, that ſhould ſo
" deale? do not all men know
" that it muſt be firſt *molten*,
" and *purified*, before it can be
" *formed?* and that there is no
" poſſibility of putting it to a-
" ny *honourable uſe* at all, untill
" it be *tryed*, & the *droſſe* taken
" from it. What *extreme child-*
" *iſhneſſe*, and *unutterable folly*,
" is it then in any man, to take
" his childe, while ſhee is yet
" (as it were) *all earth*, even, as
" ſhee came into the world, in
" whom *nature* is nothing *ripe*,
" and *grace* exceeding *raw* (if
" at all begun) and to offer to
" give ſuch a one, to be a
" *Crowne*, who is but newly

crept

" crept out of the *cradle*, to be-
" come a *Wife* before she well
" understand what it is to be
" *a childe*, and married *so young*,
" that by that time she be *old*
" *enough* to be married, the
" wedding day is *scarce remem-*
" *bred*: and if they cannot
" well beare the *day* in memo-
" ry, doe but thinke how well
" they were fitted for the *du-*
" *ty*? There should (in all rea-
" son) be a little more space of
" time betweene the *swadling*
" *bands*, and the *marriage-bed*,
" then is found among these,
" who are thus *childishly*, and
" *over-early* united.

The pretence of this practice, is onely politicke, of uniting great *families*, and *heires* together, *house to house*, *land to land*, which to attempt (by this meanes) though the

A faire pretence for a foule fact. Esai. 5. 8.

LORD

LORD had not *said* it, yet could every man *see it*, to be wofull; becauſe it is not to *ioyne heart to heart*, and to *glew* the *Husband* and *Wife*, *in good affection* together; which in a marriage ought to be more *predominant*, then *the combining of all earthly poſſeſſions*. And in this regard, is the expedition *prepoſterous* and *execrable*. *Prepoſterous*, in that it putteth the *act of marriage* before *any poſſible aptneſſe* thereunto, *Execrable*, in regard of the very ordinance of matrimony, which theſe parents impiouſly *pervert*; for whereas it is the *ioyning* of two perſons for *coniugal duties*, and *comforts*, theſe (too young married perſons) muſt *immediately* after the ſolemnization, be *ſevered* and *ſent* into *remote places*, and after ſome yeeres

Mat. 19. 6.

This courſe is
1 Prepoſterous
2 Execrable.

yeeres of ſeparation, they meete *as ſtrangers* one to another, *not well* knowing each others *faces*, and *not at all*, their *owne places*. But the Lord hath *fearefully frowned* in great fury, upon the *fooliſh forwardneſſe* of theſe *haſty parents*, ſuffering divers of them to live, to *ſee* the miſery of that, through many of their owne *aged dayes*, which they *ſo unſeaſonably diſpatch'd*, and wrapt up in the *non-age* of their children, before they knew the right hand from the left, in any thing belonging thereunto. Gods anger againſt it.

The Holy Ghoſt, *in ſome reſpects* (for wee may in no wiſe take it for truth, as *a generall rule* without all limitation) pronounceth a *woe to that land whoſe King is an infant*; now if in ſome ſenſe, a *Kingdome* be, Eccleſ. 10. 1.

(by this reason) more *unhappy*, because of the *Kings minority*; certainly, *that family* cannot be hoped to be *happy in all*, wherein the *King* and *Queene* too (the *Husband* and *Wife*) are both *babies*, (in comparison of what they should be) in this *matrimoniall Kingdome*. Out of all question, he that saith in our Text, *a gracious wife is a crowne*, meant to shame all such as should thrust those into marriage, who (in such childhood) can *hardly* be *gracious*, and not *possibly* be *Wives*. Let parents be put in mind *hereof*, and admonished to be more advised *herein*, that they labour, and doe their best, to *prepare* their children for that estate whereunto they are (in due time) to *enter*. Let us *preferre* our best desires

to

to heaven for them; and *performe*, our best endeavours upon them, that the Lord, and Father, of us, and ours, would please; daily to expell all their pollution and purifie their hearts by powring into them the *abundant influence* of his *blessed spirit*, that they may be *first crowned* with *grace*, and *holinesse*, and then (*being also meete in nature*) they may become *Crownes* in *marriage* to such men, as unto whom God (by our hands) shall give them. And so much wee had to say to *parents* in this particular.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

The inforcement of that second use of the excellency of marriage to husbands wives, and children, concluding with an admonition to all in generall.

To husbands whose carriage of themselves must be such as becomes a crowne.

THe next lesson hence, is to *Husbands*, who considering that they see, and know, that a good Wife is such a *Crowne*, must learne by all meanes, to carry themselves *accordingly* unto them, and that in *these three things* especially.

Cohabitation. 1 Cor. 7. 14. 15.

First, in *cohabitation* with them: a thing that the Apostle *Paul* perswades Husbands by many powerfull arguments,

ments, even with *unbeleeving and pagan wives* (how much more then with *christian*) and the Apostle *Peter* is peremptory in it, by expresse precept [*Husbands dwell with your Wives*] and indeed, all reason doth induce the *perpetuall residence* of the Husband & Wife together: except only in cases wherein the Lord calleth for a *separation*, which is ever but *for a season*: either *ordinary* when a mans calling carrieth an inevitable necessity of absence, as it fareth with *sea-faring men*, and such other persons, whose *lawfull* and *needfull* employments lye abroad: or *extraordinary*, when for some respect of *holinesse*, and *religion* God will have them to keepe *apart*, and abstaine *for a season*; when as yet, (in this case) *one*

1 Cor. 7. 3.

In what cases and among what men, cohabitation is not required of necessity.

house

house, may hold them *both*. This *latter* is but seldome, the *former* more *usuall*, but both most *lawfull*.

A sharp reproofe for roaming Husbands.

We, upon this consideration that a *Wife* is a *Crowne*, doe *rebuke*, and *blame* none, but those *vagabond Husbands*, that love not the *ayre* of their owne houses, but play the *runnagates* upon the earth, and *range* all the world over, delighting to wander up and downe, that if the Lord should aske them *whence* they come, or *where* they have beene, they must make the devils answere, if they will speake truly [*from compassing the earth to and fro, and walking in it.*] A course, exceeding ill becomming him, that hath a *Crowne*, and would keepe it in *honour* and *peace* upon his head: for his

needlesse

needlesse absence is the only opportunity, for *matrimoniall treason*, and for every ungodly practise, whereunto *Satan* may tempt in such a time: the prevention whereof was the Apostles *expresse*, and most *speciall* caution, even in that separation, which was otherwise advised unto them for a season [*lest Satan tempt you*]. What evill soever doth ensue, bee it never so *sinfull against God*, *shamefull before men*, such a Husband must beare it, with all the mischiefe that may follow upon it; seeing without *warrant* and *enforcement* from GOD, hee will bee *absent*. When any man is *thus abroad*, he may well thinke the *divell is at home*. 1 Cor. 7. 5.

Are not the *Husband* and *Wife one*? ought they not to Examples of cohabitation. Rut. 1, 16, 17.

live,

2 King 2.2, 4.6. *live*, and *love together*, as did *Ruth* and *Naomi*, *Eliah* and *Eliſha*, whom no perſwaſions could part upon *any tearmes*, for *tearme* of life? What a monſtrous miſery is it, that Huſband and Wife ſhould bee as *Iew* and *Samaritan* [*who meddle not*] and that any man ſhould be ſuch a *ſtranger* to his owne houſe, that the *dog* barkes at him, when he comes home, as at one he doth not know to be his *maſter*. It is *good policy* in *Kings* to bee reſident in their *Kingdomes*, and it is their *practiſe* to be ſo, unleſſe mighty and moſt urgent occaſions doe call them abroad: the *Husband* that doth ſo, ſhall finde the ſame his comfort, let him keepe where his crowne is, & ſay to his Wife as *Ruth* to her mother, [*where*

then

thou dwelleſt I will dwell] and *Eliſha* to his maſter, [*I will not leaue thee*]. That man knowes little in marriage, who perceiues not, that *cohabitation* is the *conſolation* and *contentation* of the Husband and Wife; it carrieth with it, all *opportunities of good*, it cutteth off, *all occaſions of evill*, it nouriſheth all *entire amity*, and maketh that houſe *a little heaven* where it is carefully obſerved: In a word, it is exceeding *profitable* to the *Husband*, *Wife*, and *whole family*, and *pleaſing* to God in regard of them all, for if according *to his law* they will dwell (as they ought) together, he, out of *his love* will dwell among them, and bee their God for ever.

Ruth. 1. 16
2 King. 2. 4.
Cohabitation is the conſolation of Marriage eſtate.

Secondly, the *Wife* being the *Husbands Crowne* muſt be much 2

Honour due to the wife.

much *respected* by her Husband, in his cohabitation with her. *Crownes* are no *contemptible* things. The Apostle *Peter* is exact in commanding this, together with *cohabitation* [*Husbands dwel with your Wives as men of knowledge, giving honor unto them, as unto the weaker vessells*] as if hee should say, *that those Husbands doe not know how to dwell with their Wives aright, who doe not honour them as they ought.* But (it may bee) some will aske, and enquire, wherefore, and in what respects a Wife must bee *honoured*? I answer, in divers regards, but most especially in these few: to wit, as she here is called *the Crowne of her Husband*, elsewhere, *the glory of the man*: *his companion*; nay his *second selfe*: the *mother* of his children

Question. Why, and in what respect a wife must be honoured. Answer. 1 Cor. 11.7 Mal. 2.14. Eph. 5, 28, 29.

children; the *miſtreſſe* of his family: If in theſe regards God have made a Woman *an honour* to man; the Lord lookes, that man ſhould give *honour* to a *Woman*. He that *receives honour* by his *Wife*, hath good reaſon to *give honour* to his *Wife*.

But it will be *obiected*: that the Wife is (of the two) the *inferiour* and muſt the *ſuperior* honour the *inferiour*? *Obiect.* Herein the ſuperiour muſt honour the inferiour.

I *anſwer*, true it is, that the Wife is (of the two) the *inferiour*, and the Husband is *above* her; howbeit, her inferiority is not ſuch, or ſo great, as *barres* his *honor* from her; ſhe muſt *be ſubiect to her Huſband*; yet ſo, as withall ſhee may *be honoured by her Husband*. And indeed *this inferiority* is not ſo much, as moſt men doe (*cuſtomarily* *Anſwere.* The wives inferiority what

marily) conceive it to bee. It was (no doubt) ſomething *before the fall*, as the Apoſtle concludes from *a three fold* argument. 1. From the *priority* of mans creation: [*The man was*
1 Tim. 2. 13. *firſt created, not the woman.*] 2. From the *manner* of womans
1 Cor 11. 8. 1 Cor. 11. 9. creation: [*The woman was made of the man, not the man of the woman.*] 3. From the *end* of her creation alſo: [*The woman was made for the man, not the man for the woman.*] And *ſince the fall*, it is no leſſe (but
1 Tim. 2. 13. rather more) becauſe ſhee being the *firſt in the tranſgreſsion*, her *ſubiection* was the more augmented and confirmed. But take it at the *moſt* and *worſt* that may bee, it will yet fall ſhort of that which too many would have it to bee: who *imperiouſly* preſſe, that the

Though the husband be the head, yet the wife is not the foot.

Husband

Husband is the head, let it bee; yet, is not she *the foote*: hee is the *superiour*, true; yet shee is not the *slave*; the disparity is not so *extraordinary*, that shee being to call him *Lord*, shee must thereupn be counted his *vassall*. Nay soft: you see here is *subiection* due to him, to keepe her from being *proud*; and honour due to her, that he should not bee *imperious*. Let either have their owne; and both will bee well qualified. In the *greatest subiection*, a Wife must have *honorable estimation*. Doe but consider *what* God commands? *what* she deserveth? *how* she is entituled? *how* her sex is honoured in the mother of Christ? *how* our father and mother (who must be both more then a little honoured) must bee forsaken for her;

The true use of her subiection two fold.

How father and mother must be forsaken for her.

her; and I presume, a *reasonable man* would bee perswaded, that (at her meanest) hee must entertaine an honourable regard of her. And if we ad these and the like considerations, and *thinke thus* with our selves; *shee is Gods excellent creature; my honorable crowne; God made her both these, that she might be my best blessing, even the consummation of mine externall happinesse; and shall I not honour her, and esteeme of her? she is my companion, though not my equall, shee is one with mee, though something subiect to mee; and inasmuch as the Gods is not great, her honor must not be little; GOD hath made her a little lower than my selfe, and hath crowned me with her honour, why should I not crowne her with mine?*

The husbands thoughts towards a vertuous Wife.

Malach. 2. 14.

Eph. 5. 31.

And

And here I might encounter two extreames, in both which I see men are subject to erre. Some are *beyond* the bounds, and others are *short*. They that exceed, are such as are *too fondly uxorious*, and love without moderation or discretion; which wee may deservedly call *dotage*, flowing from *blind affection* without the guidance of the understanding; when a man thinkes he cannot make manifestation enough of his kindnesse to her, but is still overflowing, in all companies, times, and places, making as much of her, *every where*, as a child doth of a *baby* or *puppet* which they still *handle*, and *dandle*, wherever they come. This humour is *vaine* and *idle*, the man that useth it, may himselfe *thinke* he doth

A reproofe of 2. extremes in the Husband. I he too fond. 1. uxorious.

1

doth *honour his wife*; but the wiſe that doe obſerue it, doe *know* that hee doth *ſhame himſelfe*.

2 The furious.

Another ſort are as far *wide* and *ſhort*, as theſe are *beyond*, and further too; and they are ſuch, who are as *furious as they are fond*, and take liberty (whether the Lord allow it or no) to *ſtrike* their Wives. A courſe which *I cannot ſee*, how it can conſort with the *honour* wee ſpeake of (as it could not ſuite with the *love* wee ſpake of before.) It is to mee *very hard* to apprehend how a man *may ſmite*, where he *muſt honor*: how can *blowes* and *it*, dwel together, and both be *well beſtowed* on one party. Stripes (where wee may give them) doe argue inferiority without honour. But I cānot now ſtand

Againſt barbarous husbands that will ſtrike their wives.

to

to take the weapon out of the Husbands hand, I hope *this honour* will *command* it out; if not, ſure, it is in *an ill hand*, for *this end*, hath God *ſanctified* the Husbands *ſtrokes* as any means to mend the Wife, as I intend to declare more clearely in my *fore-remembred Treatiſe*, when the Lord ſhall give mee opportunity thereunto. In the meane time, for our preſent purpoſe, all that wee preſſe, is the *mediocrity* betweene both theſe *extremities*, to wit, that every Husband muſt *duly* honour his wife, and not be eyther *fooliſhly fond* over her, or *furiouſly cruell* to her. Though ſhe be a *ſubiect*, ſhe may not be *ſervilely abaſed*, and becauſe ſhee is a *ſubiect*, ſhe may not be *ſillily* advanced; her *honour* and *ſubiection* may well *brooke* one ano-

ther; neyther is ſhee *ſo much a ſubiect*, but ſhee may be, and muſt be *honoured*; nor yet ſo *much honoured*, but ſhee may, and muſt be *ſubiected*. GOD would have theſe two *tempered*, not *oppoſed* he requires they ſhould *dwell* together, *not expell* one another.

3 Maintenance due to a wife. What,

Thirdly, a *Wife* being a *Crowne*, requireth *maintenance*, and it is the Husbands duty to give ſo much, as it is requiſite for her to have; and that is as much, as his eſtate (*with the welbeing of it every way*) will afford. The *Crowne* muſt be maintained, it is for the *honour* and *ſafetie* of the *King*, and of the *contentment* of the *ſubiects*, that it have ſuch ſupportation as is meete. The very appellation of a *Crowne* doth carry a *neceſsity* hereof with it, and

con-

controleth ſuch as faile in the performance of it. And of theſe, *two* ſorts are to be *taxed*. *Some* are in the *one* extreme of *avarice*: ſome in the *other* of being too *profuſe*. Of the former, we find many Husbands who are ſo *hyde-bound* towards their *wives*, that *willingly* they can afford them little, or nothing, being *more ſicke* of *baſe niggardice*, then was *Nabal that ſottiſh churle*; for wee doe not reade that hee was hard to *Abigail*, but to *David*. Theſe *cloſe fiſted fellowes*, rob the wife of that whereof ſhee is *worthy*, and in ſo doing, proclaime themſelves *unworthy*, of a wife of any worth. *Others* againe, are ſo *open-handed*, and *free-hearted*, that they ſpend they care not what upon *their wives*, but *lay it on*, and let them *lay it out* ſo

Two ſorts taxed.

1 The couetous

2 The prodigall

3

laviſhly, without *wiſedome* or *moderation*, that they that obſerve it, do rather *laugh* at their *folly*, then *applaud* their *bounty*. Both theſe are under moſt iuſt reprehenſion. And ſo are *wives* as well as *Husbands*, for they are *ſicke of both theſe diſeaſes*: *Some*, who have happy Huſbands, whoſe *heart*, and *ſtate*, alloweth freely what is fit, have ſuch *dung-hill affections*, that eyther they will not *provide* it, though they may have it; or if it be *provided* to their hand, they will reſerve it, to *fill cheſts*, and *feed moaths*, rather then *credit* him with the *wearing* of it, whoſe kindneſſe did ſo *lovingly prepare it*. This is a foule evill, and unworthy a woman, who *is* the *Wife*, and *ſhould be* the *Crown* of this worthy Husband, whom in this

The wife as well as the husbands are both ſicke of this diſeaſe.

1

practice

practice ſhee doth not *honour*, but rather *diſgrace*: But I need not ſpend many words about this, for I finde but *few* (yet *ſome*) infected with it. *Other Wives* are as *wide* the other way, who will *exceede* their Husbands *ability*, in *needleſſe bravery*, who muſt, and will have it, though they *beggar* the *King*, to maintaine and adorne the *Crowne*. It is a *principle* among *proud Dames*, that [*what they affect, and the faſhion is, they may not want*] or they *will not*, come of it what will; they care not to carry their Husbands *eſtate* in one *ſute*. I could ſay more, but may not (our time being much over-ſpent) this only I adde: they that are *iuſtly noted* for this fault, are *iealouſly ſuſpected* of ſome other, for it may be obſerved *often* (*if*

The Proud Dames principle.

That much honesty and too much bravery seldome dwell together.

not ever) that [*much honesty and too much bravery seldome dwell together.*] A man would bee loth to give so much for all the *best qualities* of some of theseas one of their *worst coats* cost. It is hard to say who is most *blame-worthy*, whetherthe *Husbands* or *Wives* thus offending, but sure it is, the evills are *shamefull* on both sides, & and (either way) *ill beseeming* this honorable estate. Let *Husbands* bee *wise* to give the *Wife* what is *belonging* to her. Let *Wives* be *sober*, and *satisfied* with that which is *fit*: it is *base* in the Husband to *withhold so much*, it were *grosse* in the Wife to *desire more*. And this is all wee have to say to *Husbands* from hence.

3 A lesson to wives.

Wee are now to set upon *Wives*, who are so *dignified* here

in

in our text, and in many other places, but their *dignity*, doth not aboliſh their *duty*; if any doe thinke ſo, let her have *no honour*, till ſhe have learned to doe *her homage*. Well: yet they are *Crownes*, God calls them ſo. True; but *(withall)* know, that he who beſtoweth *this exellency* uponyou, requires *ſome duty* from you; let us now ſee what that is.

Firſt, if the wife bee the *Crowne*, it followeth in al good reaſon that the Husband is the *King*, whom ſhee muſt acknowledge, and obey in all matrimoniall *Loyaltie* and *love* If any ſhall make queſtion of this conſequence, wee will doubt whether ſhee bee a *Woman*, or ſome *witleſſe creature*; but, out of doubt, ſhee is farre enough from being a

The wifes dutie is, I Love and loalty.

Crowne. All ſenſe conſents to this, as *right* and *good*: I being the *Crowne*, my *Husband* is the *King*; *he* muſt *rule*, *I* muſt *obey*; *he teach*, *I learne*; *he diſpoſe*, *I ſubmit*; there muſt be in mee a *wiſe mixture* of *love* and *feare*, my *ſubmiſſion* and my *affection*, muſt be both *free* and *faithfull* unto him, who is my *matrimoniall Lord* and *Soveraigne*, and unto whom I ought to *ſtoope* in all *ſeemely ſervice*, and *obedience*.

The Proverb verified: no ſeruice to a King.

The *Proverb* is, [*there is no ſerviceto a King*] but certainly, there is *no Kings ſervice to this*, for why? Kings can give the greateſt about them, but *rewards* when they have done their beſt: but the Husband gives the Wife *himſelfe* for her *obedience*; ſo *admirably* honorable is it in a *Wife*, *truly* to *honour* her *Husband*. Nothing

graceth

graceth a *wife* like her *duty*; nothing *honoureth* her like *humility*; neither can any thing *vilifie*, or *defame* her more, then *rebellion* against him, whom shee ought to *reverence*. An *undutifull wife* is a *home-rebell*, a *house-traitor*; and let her that is such a one, know; that, wherein her *matrimoniall King may not*, or *cannot* touch her, in case of her delinquence, the *King of Kings*, the Lord God almightie, will *reach* her, and (in his just wrath) bee *avenged* on her, and *enforce* that service which had shee done him *cheerefully*, it had beene *comfortable*, as now to doe it by *constraint* is *miserable*.

An undutifull wife is a home-rebell, a house-traytor.

2 Honour is due to the wife.

Secondly, *the Wife* being her *Husbands Crowne*, it is her duty to *grace him*; and good reason, for this is the *plaine English* of

this *borrowed* word [*Crowne*] and the onely reaſon of this *honourable apppellation*. This title cannot *grace her*, unleſs ſhee (*firſt*) *grace him*. For *note well* (& of all other let *women* note it beſt) a *Woman* is not called *a Crowne ſimply, and of her ſelfe*, as if ſhe were ſo conſidered *abſolutely*, and *alone*; but *relatively*, and onely in *reference* to her Husband; not as a *Woman*, but as a *gratious Woman*, & a *Wife*: ſo ſaith our text, that ſhee is [*the Crowne of her husband*] that which *ſhe is*, ſhe is in *regard of him*. And to ſay as the truth is much of a *Husbands* honor may lye in his *wife*, for amongmany excellent markes of a good wife this is one which *a Woman* gave, that [*her Husband is knowne to be a renowned man, a man that is eminent among the beſt*

Note well how a woman is a Crowne, not ſimply, but relatively

Pro. 31. 22, 25.

best that sit in the gates.] And we reade in that *benediction* of *Ruths* marriage with *Boaz*, the people pray for her, to the end [*that he may be famous*] signifying, *that she might doe much toward his honour and reputation.* Ruth. 4. 11.

And if *you women* would remember and ponder this wel, that this glory is *yours* because *of us*, and that you hold it *in our right*, and by no other *title*, or *tenure*, but as you are *our glory* and *honour*; wee might bee bold to assure our selves it would be a *curbe* to your *pride*, and *vanity*, and a mighty *encouragement* to your *obedience* & *duty*; yea an excellent *band*, to *binde* you to us, because wee presume you are so *hungry* after your *glory*, that if *conscience* could not, *credit* would enforce you to *regard* & *grace* us; seeing

It is the womans honour to honour the man.

seeing that, untill you have done it *to us*, it is not *due to you*. Know, that it is *your honour* to *honour us*; we must be *actually* acknowledged *your Kings*, before you can be *entituled to our Crownes*: and *then* you have right to this title, and not *before*. All your *excellency*, depends upon the doing of your *duty*, thence only you have it. *Doe* the one, and *enioy* the other. To be a *Woman* and to be a *wife*, is not enough to bee a *Crowne*, a man may have one that is both these, and yet, she that he hath, may bee a *shame* unto him. There goes more than *two words* to this bargain; to be a *Woman*, a *wife*, and *gracious*, do blesse her that is so, and make him happy, who enjoies such a one; if you be found *thus*, you cannot faile of your glory.

To be a woman and to be a wife is not enough to be a Crowne.

glory. *Goe and learne what this is*, and evermore remember well, *that all your excellency is wrapped and twisted up, in the renowne we receive from you; and whatsoever you challenge this way, is then to bee paid to you, when yours is (in the first place) performed to us, from you.*

Say not in your selves, that if you be *no Crownes* to us, wee are no *Kings* over you; that argumentation is idle; you cannot *be even* with us so: no, no, the *oddes* is *ours*, it is with us, as with *Kings*, who are Soveraignes, as well over *bad subiects* as *good*, yea, over *rebells* (in right) also, as of those that are *loyall* unto them. *Every Husband* is the *Wives King*; though *every Wife* be not her *Husbands Crowne*. Indeed, we are *happier Kings*, if you be our *Crownes*

Every husband is the wifes King, though every wife be not her husbands Crowne.

Crownes, but if you be not; *yet know*, wee doe not loſe our *preeminence* by your *diſobedience*: So that now (you ſee) there is no ſtanding upon termes with us, ſeeing that upon no terms you may be accounted our *crownes*, till you have *receiued graces* from *God*, and employed them *to grace us*, and ſo deſerued our *great honor*, by your *good demeanour*. *Endeauour* therefore to that, *care* to be dutifull; the other will *offer* it ſelfe; you cannot but be *honorable* both with God and man. And this is all we ſay to *Wives*.

Thus have wee ſaid ſomething to *all ſorts* of *married perſons*: now (e'r wee give over) it is meete wee ſpeake to ſuch as are *unmarried* yet, but may enter on this eſtate in due time: a word therfore we wold have

A fourth leſſon to children.

have with *Children*, and that is this: That considering the *premisses*, they must be informed, that it is their part and dutie, to adde their best *cares to their parents* foresaid *endeavours*, toward the attainment of that honour, whereof wee haue now spoken. Some *children* have *no parents*: some have *parents* that have no *care*, to help forward their best happinesse; the more diligent and regardfull doth it become them to be, who *want such means* of their good. But admit all *children* had such *parents*, as tooke *all care* of them, and still striving with God for them: what were all the *desires*, and *endeavours* of the most *holy and and industrious Parents*; if the *childe* have not a heart to doe his owne parr. Wee have no

A childe must doe his part in his place.

reason

reason to thinke that *Abraham* was behinde for *Ishmael*, either in *prayer* to God for him, or in the *practice* of any good thing upon him; the LORD doth
Gen. 17. 15. witnesse unto us, that hee was
Gen. 18. 18. *faithfull* in both, yet is not *Ishmael* any whit the better, because he was wanting *to himselfe* in what hee (also) should have done *for himselfe*. *Parents* cannot doe all, and performe their *owne*, and their *childrens* parts also. The good which the *parent* doth endeavor, cannot come unto the *childe*, if hee *neglect* himselfe. And therefore all *children* that ever hope to be happy in this (or any other) estate, must most *humbly* and *sincerely* seeke the face of the Lord, and betake themselves to him, who will *crowne* all such, as *in their soules* doe come

come unto him. He is the *father of all that is called father*; he is the *father of ſpirits*, and he that *gathereth us up* (and doth *become a father to us*) when the *fathers of our bodies do forſake us*; to him wee muſt *ſeeke*, to him wee muſt *ſticke*; it is hee that muſt fit us to be what we may be, either *Husbands, Wives, Fathers, Mothers, Maſters*: and as [*without him*], we cannot be ſuch; ſo neither [*without us*] will hee make us ſuch; that is to ſay, as it cannot bee without *his kindnes*, ſo neither ſhall it be *without our care*. His *mercy*, and our *duty*, his *favour* and our *prayer*, muſt meete, and kiſſe each other, which if they doe, (and *we faile not* before him) *he cannot faile* to doe us good, but there ſhal be *aſſured*, and moſt *ſweete* correſpondence,

Ephes. 3. 15.
Hab. 12. 9.
Pſal. 27. 10.

dence betweene *him* and *us*; the *harmony* will be *heavenly*, when his *kindneſſe* ſhall joyne to our *obedience*; he will not *hide* his face from thoſe, that *heartily* looke unto him; but will *unfolde* his fatherly heart, and *open the fountaine of grace*, to all that are thus *upright* before him.

In thus doing ſhall [you] *children*, appeare, and approve your ſelves to be the *children*, as well of your *heavenly*, as of your *earthly* father, and he will acknowledge you, and honor you, (though *they* ſhould not; and when *they* cannot) in endles happines, with himſelfe.

The ſinne of careleſſe children.

But otherwiſe, if this bee *not done*, for your beſt being you are *undone*; the good endeavours of your parents ſhall *diſcharge* the *conſcience* of it to them

them, and *revenge* the *contempt* of it upon you. But if you ſhall cleave to him *unfainedly*, ſo will hee to you *graciouſly*, giving unto you beyond whatſoever either your *parents*, or your *ſelves*, *could aske or thinke*, caſting in ſuch an unſpeakeable *overplus* of all good, as you cannot *apprehend*, till you do *poſſeſſe*. Draw neere to him then, (*O yee children*,) and he (*as a father*) will draw neere to you. His favour was never *farre* to ſeeke, of *any* that *faithfully* ſought him. Ephe. 3. 20. Iam. 4. 7.

Now our *laſt words* wee intend to all, that have, doe or ever may, enter upõ this eſtate; and unto every one of thẽ doth this truth ſpeak, in the *due ponderatiõ* of the particulars already revealed: and ſurely ſuch as are *wiſe*, will *thus* conſider with themſelves. *Is*

Is the *wife* a *Crowne*? *is* the *Husband* a *King*? *doe* these follow one upon another naturally?, why then; to the *married I say, yet not I, but the Lord; let them labour to liue so holily, and happily together, as it becommeth them, that beare such glorious titles, that the Lord who gaue them may be glorified in your enioyment of them.* And to the *unmarried*, such as shall or ever will, ayme at this estate; seeing so it is, as we have seene, let it be your care so *affectionately*, to beg all fitnes *before hãd* that you may *enter* upon this estate *with honor* and *comfort* to your selves, and *goe on* in it, and (in due time) *finish* it, to the honor of that God, who is the glorious *author*, and *founder* of it.

1 Cor. 7. 10.

An admonition to all in generall.

Finally, to all in *generall*, and to each one in *particular*, that

are

are already entred, or doe intend this eſtate: I adviſe and counſell them, to bow their hearts and knees before the Lord, to beg of him, & to beſeech his maieſty that of his *free grace*, he will pleaſe to *glorifie himſelfe*, ſo in our *naturall* matrimony one with another, that in it, we may bee furthered in the myſticall match betweene *him* and *us*: that *Husband* and *wife*, may in ſuch ſort mannage their *marriage* that this *Crowne matrimoniall* may be (as it were) the *harbinger* of that which is *immortall*; to the wife; and that to the Husband, the being of the *King of a family*, may be the *fore-runner*, of being a King *(with the King of Kings)* in *glory*; that the *union* of each to other during naturall life, may be the

earneſt

earneſt penny, of the *eternall vnion* of both to the *Lord of life*, for ever and ever.

That ſo, when the day of *divorce* & *ſeparation* ſhal come; either by death, or by *iudgement*, both may be *ioyned* to the *Lord*: and (*ſeeing in the reſurrection, there ſhall be no marriage, nor giving in marriage, nor any knowledge of any after the fleſh*) he may bee pleaſed then to take us to *himſelfe*, & marry us to the *Lambe*, even the *Lord Ieſus*, whoſe *Bride* (and hee our *bleſſed Bridegroome*) our ſoules doe *deſire* and *long* to bee; that we may heare thoſe heavenly voices ſounding ſweetly in our eares. *[*Behold the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Bride hath made her ſelfe ready. Bleſſed are they that are called to the marriage ſupper of the Lamb.* Even

Math. 22. 30.
2 Cor. 5. 16.
Rev. 19. 8. 9.

ſo

ſo ſaith the Spirit & the Bride *Come*: even ſo ſaith every *faithfull & beloved ſoule*, who *loveth*, and *looketh*, and *longeth*, for the ſame, *Come*; *Come Lord Ieſus*: *Come Lambe of God*: *King of Saints*; *Head of thy Church*; *Husband of thy Spouſe*; come and make this *temporary marriage* of mine, according to *thine ordinance*, *to end*, in that *endleſſe glory of thy Saints inheritance*; that when *once we ceaſe to bee each others* any more *on earth*, we may *both* be *thine* evermore *in heaven*, there *to ſit downe with Abraham*, *and Iſaac*, *and Iacob*, and al thy *deare Saints* to praiſe and laude thy glorious name for ever and ever: Amen, Amen, even ſo bee it, ſaith my ſoule. AMEN.

Glory be to God on high.

FINIS.



The Husband is the Wiues hed Eph 5. 23.
The Woman is the Glory of the Man 1 Cor. 11. 7

THE CROVVNE CONJVGALL, OR THE SPOVSE ROYAL.

A Discovery of the true Honour and happinesse of *Christian Matrimony*.

Published for their consolation who are married, and their encouragement who are not, intending the benefit of both.

By IOHN [illegible]ING, late Pastor to the *English* congregation resident at *Vlishing* in ZEELAND.

Prov. 12.4. *A vertuous* WOMAN *is the Crowne of her* HVSBAND.

LONDON,
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ner is, to *congregate and assemble his agents*, and to helpe them with al the *subtilty* he can convey into them; and they *plot* and they *prate*, they *argue*, and *debate*, they *discourse*, and *canvasse* every thing they can conceive, how to carry most *closely*, and effect most *cautelously*, what they intend and purpose to execute. Worse therefore, then the *worst men*, yea, then the *divell* (*who is worse then all men*) is their condition, who will not doe so much in this *one good thing*, as hee, and they, will endeavour *in every evill*. But this I have noted to *be a notorious subtilty* of his, very *malicious* and *mischievous*, that, as he maketh ungodly men very *vigilant* in that *which is nought*; so, would he have all men *remisse* & *negligent* in that *which*

is

is good; and prevailing in both these, (especially upon impious persons) hee doth wracke and ruinate irrecoverably, all that hee can insnare, and perswade, to make more haste then good speed, through the *giddie violence* of a *headdy* and unruly affection, which, (being but *carnall*, *sensuall*, and *devilish*) yet taking his course, can have no happier issue, then a *heavie curse*, or (at last) a *miserable crosse*.

How much more comfortable would it bee for every man and woman, better to bethinke themselves, *(and that seriously and throughly)* in this so worthy and waighty a businesse? *Deliberation* never did any man hurt; *Wisedome*, was never any mans *woe*, or *foe*, but the want of it hath bin bitter

to all such as have been over-hasty in things they have undertaken without it.

The evill issues of hasty Marriage

Miserable and lamentable experience, hath made it to apeare to every mans eie, and observation, what have beene the *wofull*, and *hellish issues*, of such *unwise* and *hasty matches*, both before God and man: it is *too easily*, and *too truely* observable, that many, who made such post haste to *weare* this CROWNE, have soone found it so *grievous and insufferable*, during a few *forlorne* daies, that they have made a *hard-shift* so live through that, to ease themselves of that insupportable plague they have *wilfully* shortned their owne sorrowfull and unhappy time, and fallen (*untimely*) into the *Crowners hands* for *their bodies*,

bodies, and (dying upon ſuch termes) who can conceive *comfortably* and not rather *fearefully* of the ſtate of *their ſoules*. Theſe (of all others) are they that juſtifie and make good, *Solomons* proverbe before mentioned, that ſuch a Wife is [*more bitter then death*] for lo, they chuſe *rather*, and thinke it *better* to *die*, then to *live* with her, and make as much haſte to their *miſerie now*, at they did to their *marriage before*.

I may not inſiſt, or dwell upon this particular, having divers more to unfold. Let us all (ſince ſo it is) reſolve to be ruled by the Apoſtles counſell (whether our marriage be to begin, or already entred upon) [*walke not as fooles, but as wiſe*]

and now, *knowing* what the wil of the Lord is, let vs endeavour to *doe* acccording to what we *know*, and then wee ſhall be happy in our deede, and have *praiſe* of God, and *approbation* of his people, and *conſolation* in our owne ſoules. And for ever hereafter, let us feare to offend in this reproved folly, beware wee of being (this way) faulty, for feare it come to us in our *matrimony*, as it did to the Iewes in their over-importunate deſire, and expedition, to have a *Monarchie*; they ſped farre worſe then ever they thought of, and ſo ſhal the man and woman that miſcarries heere, meet with mutuall miſery; HE that hoped of a *Crowne*, meets with a *croſſe*; SHE that made account of a *King*, be ſped with a *Tj-*

rant

rant, eyther, and both becoming miſerable, being neither *married*, nor *parted* by the *Lord* in any mercy, but *begin* and *end* heavily, as did the Iſraelites, who being ſo madde upon it, that a *King* they would have, not *Samuel*, nor GOD by him could perſwade, found that truely (by that time they had caſt the *firſt*, and the *laſt*, and (as wee ſay) the *middle*, and *both ends*) which *Hoſea* tells them, that their *Monarchie* began in *Gods anger*, and ended in *his fury*, [*I gave you a King in mine anger, and tooke him away in my furie*] And as then *Kings* goe to wracke, when there is diſcord about the *Crowne*; and *ſubiects* to ruine, when there is debate about the *King*; ſo, then and there, begins, and thence growes and increaſes, Hoſea 13. 11.

the

the *miserable crosse*, the *unhappy curse*, of a *Husband*, and a *Wife*, and the *whole family*; when matters have not beene wisely beforehand resolved upon, and ordered by *wisedome*, then comes *strifes*, *debates*, *bitter words*, and *blowes*, (which cannot but be *barbarous* betweene *Husband* and *Wife*) the family is in *uproare and confusion*, the *Husband* and *Wife*, in *combustion*, there is nothing but *thwarting*, and *vexing* eachother, the love that was so soone *begun*, is as soone *done*, and in steed of some *slight contentment*, which either did enjoy for a *little season*, *sorrow*, *and vexation of spirit*, abideth with them both, for *terme of life*.

Doth it not behoove every man, to have *speciall care*, and exceeding *great circumspection* in

in this one thing? Let us guide our affaires by judgement, and beseech the Lord to give us understanding, against our *indiscretion*. They that come together *unadvisedly*, for the most part, are parted *desperately*. *Misery* without *measure*, or mitigation, attends and ouertakes, those that *begin* and *end*, without *leasure* and *consideration*.

Hee may well, and worthily be thought a very ignorant man, who reading the *letter of this Text*, that such a woman is a mans *Crowne*; doth not readily conceive, *some of the sense* to import this particular, *that the businesse of matrimony is worthy of much deliberation, and may not be attempted, and consummated with superficial sudden and slender thoughts*.

If

If to marry be a *Crowne buſineſſe*, not onely *conſcience* in thoſe that are *religious*, but *common ſenſe* in all that are *reaſonable* will ſay, it muſt be moſt *warily* adviſed upon, being ſo *waighty*. And if wee have both theſe, (*religion* and *reaſon*) to *befriend* in this point; let them goe for *enemies* to both, who ſhall neglect, *eyther* to take *due notice* of both, *or* faile to *doe*, according to the *notice* they ought to take.

In this then, let us betake our ſelves to God, for all the good counſell that *heaven*, or *earth*, *God*, or *man*, may (by any meanes wee can uſe) helpe us to.

It is no ſhame or diſcredit, but it well becomes every one that is to meddle with this matter of marriage, *to beg*, and

to borrow as much as hee can. *To beg* from the Lord, *to borrow* from his children, all the wiſdome wee can, the more wee obtaine, the more able ſhall we be to *pleaſure* our ſelves, to *profit* others, and in both, to *pleaſe* GOD, who doth delight to have his children ſue unto him. His name is [*Counſellour*] and he hath promiſed to [*guide us by his counſell*] Seek his face for this, hee will be found of thee, and make thee wiſe in the way that thou ſhould'ſt goe.

Iſai. 9. 6.

Pſal. 73. 24.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Precepts of wisedome and skill in chusing of a good wife.

AND this is the *first generall duty*, in the businesse of our matrimony, which wee must be *carefull* to practice, if wee would be *comfortable*, in what we doe.

Marriage requires good insight.

Touching the *second*, it is more *speciall*, and *particular* consisting of our *exact insight and skill*, which it doth concerne every one of us to have in every of those things which this word [*Crowne*] doth further represent in a *Wife*, that wee may not onely, know, *that* wee must *deliberate*, but also

alſo underſtand *whereabout*, our *deliberation* muſt bee beſtowed.

And that will appeare to be in divers particulars, which wee will endeavour to goe through in their order.

And *firſt*, hee that calls a *Wife* a [CROWNE] doth undoubtedly take it for granted, that *as Crownes* are, *ſo Wives* ought to be of *the beſt ſubſtance, & conſtitution*, *Crownes* are compoſed (as was before noted) of the rareſt royalties, that can be had, the *fineſt gold* is for matter, and the ornaments of it, all other excellencies of *pearle*, and *precious ſtone* that can be got. Thus muſt it alſo be in this *coniugall Crowne*, no *Wife* can bee a *Crowne to her Husband*, but ſhe muſt

vvives muſt be refined women.